

*Oliver Bender*

# Is Donald J. Trump an Oligarch?



By Oliver Bender

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## Ex Libris Oliver Bender

*„Der künfftig Ptolomeus bstelt  
Das er all bücher het der welt  
Vnd hyelt das für eyn grossen schatz  
Doch hat er nit das recht gesatz  
Noch kund dar vß berichten sich  
Ich hab vil bücher ouch des glich  
Vnd lys doch gantz wenig dar jnn“  
(Sebastian Brant, Das Narren schyff, I. 13–19)*

## Introduction

### *Editorial Notes*

When it comes to planning texts ahead of writing them, I do a piss poor job. Ever since I heard of President Joe Biden's farewell address and when he came to allege his successor Donald J. Trump of being an oligarch, I was excited to learn a little more about the concept that I hitherto only heard of with reference to Russia. Little did I know, although I should have expected, that I was going to end up completely out of bounds and with a text that would be much more than a little commentary and correction of the outgoing President's remarks. As things stand now, this little side hustle as I was getting prepared to write about the Geneva Conference of 1954 in my main project turned out to become a two-months project by itself. I do not claim that it wasn't worth it as it was fun and I learnt a lot in the process. But I admire those who are able to discipline themselves and are able to stop adding more and more content to their project to the point where they became immobile. Alas, I know why I do not work with publishers and instead choose my independence in my hobby: It gives me space to not deal with such hindrances.

I nonetheless remorse that of the three handwritten notes of things I wanted to add to this text; I wanted to see if I can draw comparisons between Shakespearean kings and Donald J. Trump, although there, it was finally dropped because of the flow of my text as it autonomously developed. You may hear such apologies from fiction writers who claim that their protagonists developed lives of their own and led them rather than they as the writers determining their protagonists' fates. (And think of all the readers who wouldn't have it and instead allege their favourite authors of whimsically killing them off at their audience's expense) Perhaps I could have waited a little longer until I read William Shakespeare's *Richard III* and "*Tragedy of Cymbeline*", and redirect the text in such a way as that I could still shoehorn an apparent passage in. But for what good would it have been? If there is one lesson I have learnt from the composition of this text, it's that Charles Bukowski was right: One needs to kill one's darlings. And mine were the handwritten notes and the ideas

in my head that didn't make it into this text. It still ended up to be a decent piece of work that did the incumbent, second-time President justice within the given circumstances.

Which leads me to something else that I may want to address hereby: To some readers, the tone may seem too pleasing of the incumbent President, that I even tried to curry favours with him and his sympathisers because I didn't sufficiently condemn his actions. If anyone should come out of this text with this impression, if the potential for such perceptions should exist, let me put things straight: I condemn this man's actions and what he is doing not only to the hallowed office he occupies for the second time now, but to this glorious nation as well. I have been doing so ever since he took over office for the first time, but hatred for the subject-matter doesn't excuse a lack of professionalism. Just imagine if the journalists and editors of the "Washington Post" or the "New York Times" began to write like the scriveners of "BoingBoing.net" or the "Daily Mail". Their readers would exit their subscriptions by the thousands, their income would collapse like a detonated skyscraper. Now I am not a staff writer for either of the two honourable newspapers, I am just a hobby blogger with no outreach whatsoever, but I still want to hold myself up to standards I would expect of others in the public discourse, especially those who have got a good following on social media, therefore could be held to certain responsibilities. Also, what would be the fun in writing if one wrote in a long-form text the same way that one wrote, for example, on Twitter? It would become stale and boring, and no reader could expect any surplus value from its lecture.

Now, enough of the writing process, let's talk a little about the content. Regarding the headline, the question would be how long it could take one to pick up the definition from a dictionary and compare it to the first umpteenth days of the President—so far, he has been barely two months in office, but the text has spanned for more than 90 pages. How is this possible? I confess that a good portion of the pages is filled with references to news articles that may be of no interest for the people today as we are still living through his presidency, and all of what is being said here is freshly burnt into our brains. But my experience has taught me that texts written on topical subjects age poorly overtime when the events addressed lie in the dark past. The first time I have noticed that was when I read Paul Lafargue's « Le droit à la paresse », where he as spoken about several contemporary issues that to me as someone who has only

read a little about history was benign and would have required me to look it all up with the little information that he presented to me. The second time was when I was doing research on the life of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, including skimming through some of their correspondence preserved in collected works. The online version of the “MEGA” has done an outstanding job in annotating the digitised letters already available for today’s readers who may not be familiar with the history of, say, workers’ strikes in 19<sup>th</sup> century’s Cologne, or other subjects the two of them spoke about when they wrote to each other. (When the subject wasn’t either Marx’ occasional money troubles or the stagnating progress in his writing, the letter which I can genuinely relate to) Although I am never going to achieve the fame of the likes of Marx, Engels or even Lafargue, I still wanted to make sure that whenever someone should coincidentally stumble over this text, or any other I have uploaded to the internet, they should be able to read up quickly on what I am talking about. In times of the internet’s provision of abundant information, there is no excuse to not share information on subjects that cannot be considered common knowledge. And with the many incidents President Trump is triggering, even those I have cited in the stream of this text cannot necessarily be assumed to be known by everyone. My experience since January 21, 2025, has been that it becomes a drag to catch up with everything, and I cannot vouchsafe for the actuality of all footnotes. Some I have updated, but at some point as I was nearing the end, I gave up on updating most of them, as long as it could be foretold that the basis of my assessment was not altered by the latest developments. And that was the main point all along—one cannot write about ongoing events without immediately experiencing expiration. The only ones who this curse must leave relatively unaffected are journalists who are always catching up and never overtake.

Speaking of the internet’s abundance in information, we must also speak briefly about link rot. I have previously said that I wanted the afterworld to be able to read this text and simultaneously be able to check what I am talking about by citing viable sources in the footnotes. The problem is that the topical information are usually from news articles available online. When one reads older essays and books, such as by Walter Lippmann, one will come across references to newspapers that may be out of print by now—with Lippmann, the first that comes to mind would be the New York Herald Journal. Of course there are archives, but who has got the time to commute to the next library that may

have access to an archive's resources to read up on that? And would that person believe it worthwhile to undertake this journey just to check what I am talking about? The internet conveys the convenience to not get up from one's chair or couch—one can just click the link and be redirected to a website. Quickly skim through the text to revive your memory, and jump back to the PDF. The only issue that could interrupt this process would be link rot. Researchers have already notified that nearly 20 percent of all websites are dead (M. Klein *et al.*, 2014), which may sound like a lot but technically aren't when one remembers that the web archive has got more than ten billion websites saved in alternately many crawls, the total amount pending daily. I have occasionally saved some of the sources I have quoted, but am in good graces that all of which I have cited have also been saved once either at Archive (dot) is or the Web Archive's Wayback Machine. Perhaps I will come back to also save some of the (dot) gov resources as the Trump Administration pursues the deletion and censorship of the government's online resources for the most dystopian reasons, but as I said: Given their yearslong presence online, there is a good chance that they have already been saved. I noticed it the first time that this chance realistically exists when I saw that George Washington's digitised Farewell Address was saved more than 75 times over the span of nearly a decade. I shall be damned if this proclamation should come back to bite me in the arse.

I have hesitated to write this additional passage to the Introduction also because it has become my personal signature nuisance in all of my texts and therefore didn't require an address, but since I have been writing about so many points already, it would not hurt to add this to the mix too: Some readers may notice certain signs of inconsequence in my editing, and I confess that some of them also derive from a little laziness. As I realised that one of the reasons I don't write about present topics—the aforementioned chase with the news that shape the text—I became increasingly tired of losing weekend after weekend I could have spent writing about the Geneva Conference to a text about the state of the United States, no matter how much I liked it. Once I reached the end and succeeded at the second attempt of closing the Conclusion, I didn't feel like checking whether I have always written the word "President" with an upper-case P, or other minuscule orthographical details. You would normally have an editor or copywriter for such jobs, and since this is a blog post I mostly wrote for myself and for my own pleasure, there are no drives to amend probable errors. Feel free



to contact me via the above-mentioned means to lecture me about their locations and I shall amend them by the next best time. I will of course receive constructive critique about the layout and design choices—fonts applied, structure, typeface size, &c.—I would in fact like to hear from you about this as much as about the content.

One of the other reasons I finally decided to bring this subject up was the lack of consequence on the subject of when to cite statutory laws and when to just name them in brackets within the text. I have noticed that I began citing them and later resorted to naming them in-text, but didn't generalise my practice upon realisation because I feared repercussions from MS Word when I removed the footnotes, so it stayed the way it was. The inconveniences to the reader should relay at a bare minimum, methinks. If it should be otherwise, please let me know. As for the mentioning of applicable statutory law or court rulings related to some of President Trump's actions, please do not expect cutting-edge legal analysis, I am nothing but a layman, if I could even call myself that. I cite such information the same way I cite news reports, analyses or commentary. Readers who are interested in commentary by legal experts on the laws I have cited will have to commit to the extra effort of unearthing it. No such resources were available to me anyway, so I couldn't have offered it even if I wanted to. Another minor detail that I have come late to realise was that through the Federal Register, I could learn about Executive Orders' numeration that I have previously seen in the Heritage Foundation's "Mandate for Leadership", but due to my aforementioned laggardness, I did not do good in citing them properly. Because I am a lifelong netizen who has learnt how to properly cite sources, I have treated them like I treat all sources, without any sense for special treatments. To some this may prove improper execution of my work, and I take their critique as valid, but I also had the common reader in mind who may value the link to the full text more than the FR identification number. If you value the FR ID higher, feel free to download this PDF and add them with a comment or write them in the margins.

### *Notes concerning the content*

After all this time that I have been writing this text—as I will note in my main text, I have started writing as early as when President Biden claimed that Trump

were an oligarch—one would wonder whether this text is really just about the semantics of oligarchy and the likes. And technically, yes, it is just about this topic. But as time rolled on and the “Trump train” kept on moving further towards the inevitable cliff, I noticed that it would be foolish and uninteresting to stick to just this topic, and so, I did what I mostly contemplated for myself when reading the news during his first presidency and the advent of the second: What kind of authoritarian he is. I will stick to just this term because anything else would either be far-fetched, boisterous without any substance, raucous or immature. As soon as one joins any social media network and delves into political posts, one is likely going to hear that he were a Fascist. And while I cannot claim to not have occasionally considered the etiquette myself, I have finally abstained from it because it just didn’t fit the bill. If one asked the people how they got the idea that Trump were a Fascist, the most substantiated arguments would usually refer to Umberto Eco’s late essay, “Ur Fascism”. I have spoken some details of the essay in my previous long-form text (Oliver Bender (2022), page 766), and when one reads this footnote, one will notice that it does not fit Trump’s policies or overall reöorder of US society at all. He is divisive and full of hatred, and hasn’t got a redeeming feature about him that we could interpret as charming and in pursuit of a glorious past in his country. There is no greater story he wants to tell, and unlike a Fascist, he is not interested in a strongman state. *Au contraire* ! In tandem with his right-hand man Elon Musk, he is underway to hollow the state out so that he can rule like an absolutist monarch. The backlash his party members experience and we will address later in the text shows this clearly: He is not interested in bringing his country forward, we cannot even tell that there are monetary interests involved. Instead, he seems to be driven by a lust for destruction, whether it is for a sense of retaliation due to what he had to go through during his first tenure or just because he is unable to fathom the aftermath of this detour we cannot tell. And if his first tenure has taught us anything, it’s that we must abstain from becoming armchair psychologists who treat President Trump like our collective patient. It hasn’t worked with Barry Goldwater, and it won’t work with the “man, woman, camera, TV” guy. As for Eco’s essay, while I have treated it more seriously in my main text, “Capitalism & Anarchism”, one thing must be made clear: That it is overexaggerated in its acclaim, it helps far less in making out Fascists in our everyday life (as its Dutch translation insinuates, the title reads “Hoe herken ik

een Fascist?"), How do I recognise a Fascist?), and its overall foundation could be understood as pre-emptively rebuked by the equally critically acclaimed essayist and novelist George Orwell. In his 1944 essay, "What is Fascism?", he has exposed the consequences of the excessive application of Fascism as a buzzword to smear unliked contemporaries, thus hollowing out its otherwise sharp meaning (George Orwell, 1968 [1944]). I found the modern interpretation of this sentiment of Fascism as a shutdown argument to silence adversaries in the writing of novelty novelist Marc-Uwe Kling quite fitting: In the first volume of his trilogy "Kangaroo Chronicles", his anthropomorphic protagonist, the Kangaroo, is put on trial for attempted theft of a bicycle, and when the judge is set to read its verdict, he decries him as a Fascist, thus provoking an additional fee for insulting a public official (Marc-Uwe Kling, 2017 [2009]). The author, who is also the Kangaroo's involuntary landlord/host, has provided us with the best assessment of its misbehaviour in the same sketch: It has got a problem with its anger management; perhaps the same can be said of the people who throw the term "Fascist" around too, but again: No armchair psychology, it leads us nowhere and gnaws on our credibility.

I have sometimes wondered if people like to grasp for utmost extremes because they believe that nothing else could placate a problem's direness; that as soon as someone tried to mediate by providing a sober judgment could beget relativism and disadvantageously relieve people so that they in turn underestimated said problem's urgency. As I will make clear in this text, this is not my interest, but when we always drive at the highest velocity, we will blind ourselves for more pressing problems. Everyone who learns about time management 101 will be taught that they need to prioritise their tasks, or else they will not get anything done in time. One needs to assert which tasks must enjoy the highest priority and which ones can wait for a day or two more. The same applies for the challenges of our times: President Trump is a pressing issue, there can be no doubt about it, but he is not the paramount one because he is only the symptom of an underlying, greater problem: That of Conservatism's decay, shown foremost in the misattribution of fringe right populism guised in its name. Throughout the Western world, right-winged populism of varying *extremenesses* has garnered support because politically homeless people radicalised themselves out of desperation because they lost their home to a worn-off pseudo-Conservatism that was more interested in appealing to the broadest

masses rather than keeping a clear-cut profile even though it may cost them some votes. This tendency has become clearest in German chancellor Angela Merkel, who throughout her chancellorship wore her party's profile off to such a degree that it barely stood for anything anymore. Once she left, the party not only lost a nonetheless charismatic figure, but was also left with a baggage it had a hard time laying off, while a good part of the population already showed its disenchantment with the party that no longer had anything to offer to them, especially not the Conservative alternative to the other parties that respectively served their bases and constituents.

President Trump, on the other hand, showed a party that was already hypocritical in its swinging in intervals when it comes to fiscal responsibility that they did not have to be ashamed of behaving like schoolyard bullies and even alluded to autocrats (by becoming ones themselves) as long as they achieved their goals. Many understood the rise of Donald J. Trump as a mask-off moment, that he allegedly unleashed a sentiment that was lingering within them for years. I would technically agree with them, although one could also be a little more forthcoming and allege them of being amoral opportunists who took no chances when a man ruining the Grand Old Party's reputation gained popular support within the populace. Whichever answer is the right one does not hold well for the country as a whole anyway. It does not mean that we had to show leniency towards the man who has triggered the process because he were a victim of his time, as he did not show any interest in undoing the damage he has caused, but it means that we have to reconfigure our understanding of how he came to happen and what a GOP past his presidency and political actions will look like. We cannot expect the Republican party to dissolve as so many parties have when their first and only leader died or dropped out of politics; it is likelier that it will devolve like the CCCP did in the Soviet Union, especially after the latter's downfall with the raising of the Iron Curtain and the incremental independence of its Eastern European, Caucasian and Central Asian satellite states. Republicans, if they still deserved one more chance, had to be understood like partygoers who have fun as if there were no tomorrow but were not granted the benefit of an early death, so that they had to come to the realisation that their life was not a movie, series or telltale and that they were indeed going to see another day, including the tortuous headaches. And in my opinion, those headaches cannot beget them too early.

As for now, I have said everything that I needed to say. It was plain from the start that this Introduction is not going to be able to compete with G. W. F. Hegel's famous introduction to his "Phenomenology of the Spirit" which clocks in up in the sixties and touches on so many relevant subjects to the text that many authors would be able to dedicate as much time and text to it alone as they would to the actual main text. The same won't apply to this introduction, as it comes closer to an editorial note. I still found it reasonable to address the subjects to avoid any false expectations or misunderstandings concerning the decisions I made in the process of this text's composition. I hope that none of the editorial decisions hinder the enjoyment of this little text.

Yours sincerely,

*Olivera Lundin*

### Further Reading:

Klein M, Van de Sompel H, Sanderson R, Shankar H, Balakireva L, Zhou K, et al. (2014) Scholarly Context Not Found: One in Five Articles Suffers from Reference Rot. *PLoS ONE* 9(12): e115253. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0115253>

Bender, Oliver (2022). Capitalism & Anarchism. Rationalpolitik. Link: <https://politique-rationale.blogspot.com/2022/11/capitalismanarchism.html#more>. Page 776.

Orwell, George (1944). As I Please. In: Orwell, Sonia; Angus, Ian (Eds.) (1968). *The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell*, vol. III. As I Please. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. Pp. 111–114.

Kling, Marc-Uwe (2017 [2009]). *Die Känguru-Chroniken*. Berlin: Ullstein Verlage. Seite 112.

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## Definition of Oligarchy

Before we begin to elaborate on whether Trump is an oligarch or not, we need to understand what exactly an oligarch is. I have mentioned in the introduction to this text that we are used to attach this word rather loosely to rulers with close ties to business leaders or who promote policies that benefit them somehow, anyhow. A special case would be Владимир Путин<sup>1</sup>, whose policies until the start of the full-scale invasion in 2022 has conducted policies that drained Russia's economy<sup>2</sup>. Ironically, the nationalisations and coördination of numerous businesses that ensued the full-scale invasion from

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<sup>1</sup> It is hard to find any research on the subject even though there is literature about why some élites stick to Putin despite his nationalist, protectionist and overall hostile policies. The reason for this is that too many researchers focus on bureaucrats' affiliation to the Kremlin, which is not at all of interest because of the obvious reasons: They are officials and therefore can earn an easy buck without any threats of falling from grace with the government. This can also be read in the following article:

Dmitry Gorenburg, "The Political Elite Under Putin," *Marshall Center Security Insight*, no.53 (April 2020): <https://www.marshallcenter.org/en/publications/security-insights/political-elite-under-putin-o>.

Fortunately, there are a few monographic contributions to handbooks on barely related subjects that help to explain this tendency, no matter how insufficiently. In one spot, I found a theory that links the downfall of the Soviet Union to the rise in oligarchy in Russia, and to break it down for brevity's sake, it says that the oligarchs of today were contributors to the economic reawakening of Russia today from the ruins of the USSR. Those who have now linked arms with Путин and the Kremlin as a whole rose to importance by founding companies that garnered billions from the few resources of interest found in Russia, e.g., oil. The media are a branch that could have risen to importance either way, and since Путин is aware of the import of maintaining a positive public image by means of propaganda, he has included media moguls into his inner circle. See more:

Rutland, P. (2018). The Political Elite in Post-Soviet Russia. In: Best, H., Higley, J. (eds) *The Palgrave Handbook of Political Elites*. Palgrave Macmillan, London. [https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-51904-7\\_19](https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-51904-7_19). Pp. 281-282.

<sup>2</sup> Kudrin, A., & Sokolov, I. (2017). Fiscal maneuver and restructuring of the Russian economy. *Russian Journal of Economics*, 3(3), 221-239. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ruje.2017.09.001>



2022 *cf.* has led to an improvement of the economy<sup>3</sup>. But with these footnotes, we will leave Russia behind and instead focus on the United States, since there, the question of whether an oligarchy can and will arise is yet unanswered.

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<sup>3</sup> Oliphant, Roland; Barnes, Joe; Rothwell, James; Kilner, James (Jan. 26, 2024). From scones to drones: inside Putin's arms race that is leaving the West behind. The Telegraph: <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/world-news/2024/01/26/russia-arming-itself-faster-than-nato/>

Of course, this is also linked to its strengthened ties with states that have got either a low moral fibre or have thrown their moral compass overboard; I am speaking, of course, respectively of mainland China and India. To read more about this, see:

Belton, Catherine (Jan 27, 2024). Russia projects confidence as it pursues alliances to undermine West. The Washington Post:

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2024/01/26/kremlin-global-alliances-ukraine-us/>

Whether it is due to naïveté or to not show Ukraine that one lost hope for its victory over its evil neighbour, some have belittled Russia's economy, so that some experts had to grant those people a dismal reality check: Connolly, Richard (Jan. 22, 2025). Russia's Wartime Economy isn't as Weak as it Looks. RUSI: <https://www.rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/commentary/russias-wartime-economy-isnt-weak-it-looks>

So far, the West has mostly relied on sanctioning Russia as if it still imported any essential amounts of goods from EU countries, or its highest-ranking officials and personalities still travelled to EU countries, especially since some of them saw their yachts confiscated or their bank accounts frozen. Hence, it has yet to show a more concerted marginal effect on the country's ability to continue its invasion of Ukraine. Researchers have therefore picked up on one of Ukraine's more reconciliatory strategies and suggested to incentivise deflection to shrink its army:

Foster, N. (2024). Starving Russia's War Economy. *The Washington Quarterly*, 47(3), 131-142. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0163660X.2024.2399966>. Pp. 139-141.

Unfortunately, this article was written in 2024, so before Russia began to hire North Koreans to serve in the army in Курская область. It would be hard to convince them of fleeing to the EU and abandon fighting in a war that didn't even happen under their own country's leadership, rendering them as mere mercenaries.

Nardelli, Alberto; Nienaber, Michael (Nov. 17, 2024). North Korea May End Up Sending Putin 100,000 Troops for War. Bloomberg: <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2024-11-17/north-korea-may-end-up-sending-putin-100-000-troops-for-his-war>

So, how do the professionals define oligarchy? I have got two lexica of political science, and we will take a look on both editions' definitions while excluding dictionaries as they, unlike seeming popular belief, they are no good reference works for questions that do not deal with orthography or grammar.

We will check out the "Oxford Concise Dictionary of Politics & International Relations", which chose to define oligarchy as follows: "Government by the few. The logically exclusive categories of government by one, the few, or the many have been widely deployed, but the terminology has varied." The author thus comes to the conclusion that oligarchs only legislate with their own interest in mind, not the nation's or the people's. Any correlation between the two sides' interests are therefore coincidental, not intentional<sup>4</sup>. The author refers to Ἀριστοτέλης' definition of an aristocracy as a counterpoint to the ill-famed oligarchy, as aristocrats presumably served in the people's interest, countering our colloquial understanding of the term as synonymous to monarchs. Ἀριστοτέλης has gone even further and blended, perhaps confused, oligarchy with nepotism in his book «Πολιτικά» when he compared the aristocracy to the Democracy and, both analogously, with the Constitutional government:

"[...] νῦν δὲ δεικτέον ἡμῖν περὶ πολιτείας. φανερωτέρα γὰρ ἡ δύναμις αὐτῆς διωρισμένων τῶν περὶ ὀλιγαρχίας καὶ δημοκρατίας. ἔστι γὰρ ἡ πολιτεία ὡς ἀπλῶς εἰπεῖν μίξις ὀλιγαρχίας καὶ δημοκρατίας. εἰώθασι δὲ καλεῖν τὰς μὲν ἀποκλινούσας ὡς πρὸς τὴν δημοκρατίαν πολιτείας, τὰς δὲ πρὸς τὴν ὀλιγαρχίαν μᾶλλον ἀριστοκρατίας διὰ τὸ μᾶλλον ἀκολουθεῖν παιδείαν καὶ εὐγένειαν τοῖς εὐπορωτέροις. ἔτι δὲ δοκοῦσιν ἔχειν οἱ εὐποροὶ ὧν

It can be said that preparations have taken place long beforehand, ever since Kim Jong-Un and Владимир Путин have met in Pyongyang the year beforehand:

Yim, Hyunsu (Aug. 10, 2023). North Korea's Kim dismisses top general, calls for war preparations. Reuters: <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/north-koreans-kim-calls-better-war-preparations-kcna-2023-08-09/>

Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) (July 28, 2023). Respected Comrade Kim Jong Un Hosts Reception for Russian Military Delegation. Link: <http://kcna.kp/en/article/q/e2a2b09c1d310580fa0a77fec7c0386e.kcmsf>

<sup>4</sup> Reeve, Andrew (auth.); Brown, Garret Wallace; McLean, Iain; McMillan, Alistair (Eds.) (2018). The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Politics and International Relations, Fourth Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Pp. 398-399.

ἐνεκεν οἱ ἀδικοῦντες ἀδικοῦσιν: ὅθεν καὶ καλοὺς καὶ ἀγαθοὺς καὶ γνωρίμους τούτους προσαγορεύουσιν. ἐπεὶ οὖν ἡ ἀριστοκρατία βούλεται τὴν ὑπεροχὴν ἀπονέμειν τοῖς ἀρίστοις τῶν πολιτῶν, καὶ τὰς ὀλιγαρχίας εἶναί φασιν ἐκ τῶν καλῶν καὶ ἀγαθῶν μᾶλλον.”<sup>5</sup>

But we again see a preference for the élites over perhaps more qualified personnel for the cabinet or advisers’ positions, depending on what offices are up for election or simply to be occupied—think, for example, of the aforementioned czars, to which we will come under the second chapter. There is no speech about the benefit of business leaders, although that is perhaps due to the fact that this was still a pre-mercantilist society, let alone a pre-Capitalist time. Yet such tendencies of corruption existed. Authors who have researched and written about the ancient Greek concept of oligarchies also hinted towards characteristics that we would nowadays associate with authoritarianism up until the concept of dictatorships: Suppression of the opposition, the infringement of free speech, and typical of the times, a common belief and confidence in the ruler of being wise (omnipotent even), benevolent and tyrannical only insofar as that they would be good tyrants<sup>6</sup>, a phenomenon that I have also spoken about in a different text<sup>7</sup>. ’Tis just as a broad hint for those who want to view Trump’s approximation of Musk, Zuckerberg, Bezos, &c. as an excrescence of “Capitalism”. If it hadn’t been for them, had they been more steadfast on Democracy’s side, against the authoritarian tide, Trump would have found other beneficiaries, e.g., Lachlan Murdoch or Robert Herring Sr. There will always be someone who cannot get enough and is ready to throw all principles overboard.

The obliquity of oligarchy and the élites peaks in the definition of oligarchy in the “Blackwell Dictionary of Political Science”: When you look the term up on page 228, it will refer you back to the definition for the term “Elites”. Those are described as people who are superior in some way—intellectually, managerially (and thereby producing great wealth or experiencing major successes with a business on the free market) or in other ways—and therefore enjoy a higher social standing. With reference to Vilfredo Pareto, it is alleged

<sup>5</sup> Ἀριστοτέλης (4<sup>th</sup> c. BC), Πολιτικά, 4, 1293b

<sup>6</sup> Whibley, L. (1896). Greek oligarchies. CUP Archive. Page 143.

<sup>7</sup> Bender, Oliver (Aug. 20, 2024). Trump the Tyrant. Rationalpolitik: <https://politique-rationale.blogspot.com/2024/08/Sic-Semper-Tyrannis.html#more> . Pp. 63-78.

that there are always élites in all societies, in all walks of life<sup>8</sup>. The author goes on to scrutinise the description of élites dependent on political philosophers, but in the end, what they have in common for all authors is that they are in high-ranking, even leadership, positions; positions where they can exercise power and manipulate society and the economy almost unchecked. To speak of an élite thereby becomes almost natural, given that in today's society, a figurative caste system remains where those who are borne into a lower-class family, or just to a single lower-class mother, one lives at a great risk of never arising from this gutter<sup>9</sup>. One could therefore claim that there, dynasties are fostered within a couple of families at least in countries that do not feature Democratically elected parliaments or are built on an Anarchist basis where, in my understanding, a village-sized commune, the people would elect a council that decided on enquiries where referendums were futile<sup>10</sup>. We do not need to talk about the consequences such a top-bottom government ensued, and why

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<sup>8</sup> Bealey, Frank; Johnson, Allan G. (Eds.) (1999) *The Blackwell Dictionary of Political Science. A User's Guide To Its Items*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers. Page 117.

<sup>9</sup> Valerie Michelman, Joseph Price, Seth D Zimmerman, Old Boys' Clubs and Upward Mobility Among the Educational Elite, *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 2021; qjab047, <https://doi.org/10.1093/qje/qjab047>

Virdia, S., & Schindler, S. (2019). Educational upgrading, career advancement, and social inequality development from a life-course perspective in Germany. *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility*, 60, 29-38. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rssm.2019.02.002>

Ogbu, J. U. (2020). The consequences of the American caste system. *The school achievement of minority children*, 19-56.

Basha, C. (2017). Role of education in social change. *International Journal of Advanced Educational Research*, 2(5), 236-240.

Negi, T. (2021). 'Rags to Riches' Narrative with a Twist: A Critical Reflection on Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger*. *International Journal of Academic Research and Development*, 6(2), 44-46.

<sup>10</sup> Because I have not yet written a text exclusive to the question of how to properly build and conduct an Anarchist society, my formulation was necessarily vague and awkward. To read a little about the way I see it, check out this text:

Bender, Oliver (Dec. 22, 2019). De Mundo pro Omniem. Rationalpolitik: <https://politique-rationale.blogspot.com/2019/12/free-world-for-everyone.html#more>

parliamentary Democracies are superior when we assume a government to need to exist in the first place. A government dynastically dominated by the bigwigs who have never met a poor person unless they employed one as their housekeeper. Think “Trading Places”, for example, although we do not often see such happy ends, where the richman sided with the poor man to have them have a taste of their own medicine<sup>11</sup>. In the end, Akroyd would have rather returned to his old life to take over the heritage of his family. It is the all-human instinct to value one’s own benefit over others’. Rawls may have been right when he wrote that

*“Justice is the first virtue of social institutions, as truth is of systems of thought. A theory however elegant and economical must be rejected or revised if it is untrue; likewise laws and institutions no matter how efficient and well-arranged must be reformed or abolished if they are unjust. Each person possesses an inviolability founded on justice that even the welfare of society as a whole cannot override. For this reason justice denies that the loss of freedom for some is made right by a greater good shared by others. It does not allow that the sacrifices imposed on a few are outweighed by the larger sum of advantages enjoyed by many. Therefore in a just society the liberties of equal citizenship are taken as settled; the rights secured by justice are not subject to political bargaining or to the calculus of social interests.”<sup>12</sup>*

But this is a very basic question which is often presumed by proper Constitutions already. The question is how “justice” could be preserved, e.g., how it is ascertained that the American analogy of an ascent “from rags to riches” still worked, that there will be no unsurpassable obstacles that kept people within their social class. The sources in footnote № 9, particularly the first one, shows us that in the Western world as well as in some “tiger economies”, the promise is nothing but empty words (For more information on education, especially in the US, jump to page 52). One can only promise that when education up until the higher education is accessible to everyone regardless of their social origin. It can even justify the clipping of costs in unemployment benefits on the hind end since people will be able to enter the

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<sup>11</sup> Landis, J. (Director). (1983). Trading Places [Film]. Paramount Pictures.

<sup>12</sup> Rawls, John (1999). A Theory of Justice, Revised Edition. Cambridge (MA): Belknap Press. Page 3. Underscores mine.

job market quicker and more sustainably since those people are less likely to enter an impoverishing occupation<sup>13</sup>. Amongst Neoliberals, this may be common sense because they believe in the universal ability to pull oneself up by one's own bootstraps while also being aware that there are implicit, inadvertent obstacles that make it technically impossible to succeed, no matter how hard one tried<sup>14</sup>.

As is usually the case in my texts, I have meandered far off the actual track, and so, instead of discussing the meaning of the term “oligarchy”, we have ended up speaking about social justice. But there was a link: Oligarchies are likelier to manifest inequality, and again, Russia is an appropriate exhibit A for this theory, as research has shown<sup>15</sup>. One could explain it as such: Because the dictator listens only to those within his inner circle and doesn't dare to look outside, the world could be falling apart and he wouldn't notice it. William Shakespeare's “Richard II” comes to mind. At one point, John of Gaunt complains about the king, *inter alia*, as follows:

*“A thousand flatterers sit within thy crown,  
Whose compass is no bigger than thy head;  
And yet, incaged in so small a verge,  
The waste is no whit lesser than thy land.  
O, had thy grandsire with a prophet's eye  
Seen how his son's son should destroy his sons,  
From forth thy reach he would have laid thy shame,  
Deposing thee before thou wert possess'd,  
Which art possess'd now to depose thyself.”*<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Decreuse, B., & Granier, P. (2013). Unemployment benefits, job protection, and the nature of educational investment. *Labour Economics*, 23, 20-29. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.labeco.2013.03.001>

<sup>14</sup> Sara Sternberg Greene, The Bootstrap Trap, 67 *Duke Law Journal* 233-311 (2017). Available at: <https://scholarship.law.duke.edu/dlj/vol67/iss2/1>

<sup>15</sup> Novokmet, F., Piketty, T. & Zucman, G. From Soviets to oligarchs: inequality and property in Russia 1905-2016. *J Econ Inequal* 16, 189-223 (2018). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10888-018-9383-0>

<sup>16</sup> William Shakespeare (1595), The Life and Death of King Richard the Second, Act II, Scene I.

Rulers like those are comparable to the small cartoon dog sitting at his table with a coffee mug in his hand, speaking with content that everything were fine while his whole house was up in flames. Except that such kings sit within their sumptuous palaces, far away from the greater public, enjoying their lives to the fullest together with their family, while the general population was only clothed in rags, wandering through soiled streets or sitting in their houses with no heating during the winter, or nothing to drink in the summertime. Funnily, even that would fit Putin if he weren't a бункерный дед who hasn't left the Kremlin ever since he initiated his full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Almost four years ago from the time of this writing, an investigative-research project headed by then-alive opposition politician Алексей Навальный exposed his lavish resort in the middle of a forest off the Greater Muscovite Area<sup>17</sup>. Compare this to the livelihood and qualia of the everyday Russian not only in the greater Russian hinterland, but also of those living in the likes of Москва and Петербург<sup>18</sup>. With regards to oligarchs' benefits from their entry into the ruler's inner circle, there exists evidence too. From the same opposition-driven research project, we have got evidence of Путин co-financing yachts and an otherwise exuberant lifestyle in free Western Europe, while others of the same age have to fight and die in the Ukrainian frontline<sup>19</sup>. Combine this with the knowledge that we acquired earlier, that many of the officials we see in the cabinet today have risen up the ranks of the KGB, and we have got the textbook example of an oligarchy, also in accordance with the definitions we have read above. The question now is: Can the same also be said about the United States of America.

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<sup>17</sup> Навальный, Алексей А. (19. Дек. 2021). Дворец для Путина. История самой большой взятки. Ссиака: <https://navalny.com/p/6453/>

<sup>18</sup> Beliaeva L.A. Chances and Risks as Criteria for Social Stratification of Modern Russian Society. *Sotsiologicheskie issledovaniya [Sociological Studies]*. 2022. No 11. P. 165-170. Perm. Link: <https://www.socis.isras.ru/en/article/9378>

<sup>19</sup> Старостина, Юлия; Баранин, Роман; Рубин, Михаил (23. Сен., 2022). Вычурный инвестор. Рассказ о том, как сын Дмитрия Медведева предпочел красивую жизнь походу на фронт. Проект Медия: <https://www.proekt.media/narrative/ilya-medvedev/>

## Historical Subsumption

I understand that it may seem strange to speak about oligarchy in the United States from an historical perspective, but as it so happens to be, there is literature on the subject even with remarks from the Founding Fathers who were aware of the threat. In the Federalist Paper № 57, either Alexander Hamilton or James Madison has spoken about objections against the Federal Constitution which was perceived as paving the way for oligarchs rather than the most meritorious persons. Against this he has levelled the argument that “every citizen whose merit may recommend him to the esteem and confidence of his country” could stand up for election, or to become an elector in one of the colleges that finally decide which candidate will win the presidential race. He furthermore wrote that

*“No qualification of wealth, of birth, of religious faith, or of civil profession is permitted to fetter the judgement or disappoint the inclination of the people. If we consider the situation of the men on whom the free suffrages of their fellow-citizens may confer the representative trust, we shall find it involving every security which can be devised or desired for their fidelity to their constituents.”*

If we looked at the Constitution, he would be right, because there are no prerequisites that presumed the provision of a certain proprietary capital. There is of course the advantage of gathering wealthy donors in one’s race to be able to run more boisterous campaigns on television and the internet. But such is campaigning today, and when we look towards Germany, we see that money is not everything: Even minor parties like the MLPD do not win more votes just because they have got a couple of wealthy donors who quadrennially donate up to 300’000 Euros to the party<sup>20</sup>. One could furthermore look upon the money

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<sup>20</sup> Hagen, Kevin (Nov. 29, 2015). Sieger im Klassenkampf. SPIEGEL Online: <https://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/mlpd-die-grossspender-der-kommunisten-a-1069871.html>

In this electoral season in Germany, two more news have shown that those huge sums of money also happen in larger parties, but often way before those parties have achieved their pre-electoral successes. For example, the fringe right AfD, which currently (February 02, 2025) ranks as the second-strongest party behind the centre-right Union, has received a single donation of nearly a million Euros from an affiliate of a Thuringian company that sells office supplies. Read:



that has been spent by both Republicans and Democrats alike, one would think that there must be a greater gap between the two parties after the 2024 general elections. Another example would be that of the recently deceased 39<sup>th</sup> POTUS and the 76<sup>th</sup> governor of Georgia, although he thitherto lived only as a humble peanut farmer from Plains, Georgia. Except through his party, he did not have a lot of money to show for, nor the long-ranging political career from staffer to Senator and finally to the natin's highest office. At first glance, money does not drive politics as much as a party line or the popular appeal does. Money can help easing electoral campaigns, but in the end, it is the contents one can present and accelerate that will win the election.

In another Federalist Paper, specifically Federalist Paper N<sup>o</sup> 77, Alexander Hamilton has chosen the example we have previously read in Ἀριστοτέλης; that

*“The private attachments of one man might easily be satisfied; but to satisfy the private attachments of a dozen, or of twenty men, would occasion a monopoly of all the principal*

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Venohr, Sascha; Zacharakis, Zacharias; Steffen, Tilman (Jan. 27, 2025). 999.990 Euro aus Jenas Kneipenviertel für die AfD. ZEIT Online: <https://www.zeit.de/wirtschaft/2025-01/parteispenden-afd-jena-grossspenden-vermoegen>

Again, this donation came after months of upwind for the party that has hitherto experienced a slew of fallbacks in courts when they, for example, objected to classifications as right-winged extremist and unconstitutional, so that one could think that this single entrepreneur (or whichever standing this man has got at the company; as the article states, the identity of the donator is obscure, and his place of residence stands contrary to the amount of money he has donated to the party) would approach the party similar to the “Big Tech bosses” in the US who kneel before Donald J. Trump.

As another example of how money does not decide electoral victories: A single donator has donated more than 300'000 Euros to the party DIE LINKE, a party that has lost its status as a parliamentary party both because of its electoral irrelevance and the loss of both seats in the parliament and members. Ever since a part of the party exited and joined a newly crafted party, it has lost the size required for a party to register as such in the Bundestag. To think that someone would donate that much to a party that stands on the verge of disappearing entirely from the Bundestag is benign. Read:

Keßler, Felix; Reimann, Anna; Röbel, Sven (Jan. 29, 2025). 300.000 Euro - Linke meldet größte Parteispende ihrer Geschichte. SPIEGEL Online: <https://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/die-linke-vermeldet-groesste-spende-ihrer-parteigeschichte-300-000-euro-a-01foe133-709d-40df-93b9-a4128fec0a34>

*employments of the government in a few families, and would lead more directly to an aristocracy or an oligarchy than any measure that could be contrived.”*

What he explained thereafter to function as a remedy against people enriching themselves while in office, through the oft-comfortable salaries. It is ironic that still, he did not mention the necessity of term limits to make that possible, so that one could serve one’s entire professional lifetime as a Congressman, something that has been achieved through the likes of Chuck Grassley and Strom Thurmond on the Republican aisle, and Dianne Feinstein, Chuck Schumer and Nancy Pelosi on the Democratic aisle. (To just name a few names for both parties) This has got nothing to do with oligarchy, but is another part at which enrichment through political offices is possible.

To bring up one more voice from the early days of the US republic, many of the Jacksonians feared that oligarchy was a standing and imminent threat to their young country and could at worst bring the primate of equal opportunities—the embodiment of what in the Declaration of Independence has been described as “the pursuit of happiness”—to a downfall before it even had a chance of offering the people possibilities they had never had in the Old World<sup>21</sup>. The question is how you could prevent that. The white farmers of whom the Jacksonians dominantly comprised, thought that the greatest proponent of this corruption of universal equal opportunities, besides the enslavement of African-Americans in the south which the farmers didn’t take too great of an issue in, was the emergence of monopolies who bore too much power. It is no secret that monopoly powers<sup>22</sup>, especially those we see today in

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<sup>21</sup> Fishkin, J., & Forbath, W. E. (2014). The anti-oligarchy constitution. *BUL Rev.*, 94, 669. Perm. Link: <https://heinonline.org/HOL/LandingPage?handle=hein.journals/bulr94> . Pp. 682–84.

<sup>22</sup> A more German perspective on the problem of monopoly powers on the free market can be read under the following chapter:

Lutz, F.A. (1989). Observations on the Problem of Monopolies. In: Peacock, A., Willgerodt, H. (eds) *Germany’s Social Market Economy: Origins and Evolution*. Trade Policy Research Centre. Palgrave Macmillan, London. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-20145-7\\_11](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-20145-7_11)

Otherwise, I would recommend reading Ludwig Erhard’s “Wealth for All!”, a book in which he not only outlines his economic policies for postwar Germany but also his suspicion

the tech industry, pose a major problem no matter what some denialist Libertarians like to say about them and how they were instead the milestones of the combination of a free market and the endeavours of adventurous entrepreneurs who took the risk for public good<sup>23</sup>. In order to prevent the formation of such unilaterally exploitative corporations, the Sherman Antitrust Act was passed by the U.S. Congress in the 1890's<sup>24</sup>. In short, what it says is that

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of monopolies and how they would corrupt the benefits of the social market economy. One could say that he did what the US would implement through the Sherman Act.

<sup>23</sup> Bylund, Per (Oct. 26, 2020). Why There is No Such Thing as an Exploitative Monopoly in a Free Market. Mises Institute: <https://mises.org/mises-wire/why-there-no-such-thing-exploitative-monopoly-free-market>. I have shared my two cents on that opinion on my news channel under the following link: <https://t.me/PoliticsAndEconomicsOllyffer/16713>

<sup>24</sup> Millon, D. (1987). The Sherman Act and the balance of power. S. Cal. L. Rev., 61, 1219. Pp. 1225-28; 1233; 1236 ff. &c.

Or, as former chairman of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, Alan Greenspan, commented on the Sherman Act:

*“The Sherman Act may be understandable when viewed as a projection of the nineteenth century’s fear and economic ignorance. But it is utter nonsense in the context of today’s economic knowledge. The seventy additional years of observing industrial development should have taught us something different.”*

(Greenspan, Alan (1961). Antitrust. In: Rand, Ayn (1967). Capitalism: The Unknown Ideal. New York, New York: Signet. Page 67.)

Note that he iterated those remarks in the year 1961, where there were likely fewer megalomaniac corporations than we see today, and with less power too. And if any government in between 1961 and today (perhaps some years earlier than now), it would be reinstated in some shape or form because it was required. Greenspan took some time to speak about how the Act did railroad companies in the West wrong also because they were funded in part from government subsidies (which is true, and many settlers in the West received funding for the land by the government in order to aid their desired westward expansion), but hardly addresses the true issue at hand: That despite their small part in the overall national GDP, oil companies amassed great power which gave them disproportionate attention by the government, which moreover thenceforth touches them with the kids’ gloves only. One could technically argue that such “special treatment” already proved an oligarchic government, but in reality, it only secures continuous donations, jobs and a stable GDP. Republicans in particular are likelier to turn a blind eye on probable violations of workers’ rights and union-busting.

any actions that obstruct interstate commerce or fair and square competition amongst like companies is forbidden. The sources mentioned in the 19<sup>th</sup> footnote present some basic information on the history of how it came to be, but altogether, one can say that it is one of the most basic laws one could expect of a government to introduce in order to tame the shrewd beast of the free market since in its current form, it cannot be fully trusted; it is like a wild tiger: At first it may be cute and cuddly, but as soon as hunger kicks in, one will meet the fate of Siegfried and Roy during one of their last performances.

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The other arguments Greenspan presented thereafter either don't address the issue of a monopoly's existence's consequences or miss the mark on what it ensues by not touching upon it directly. Such is the case that a monopoly may set high purchasing costs for the customers, so that competition may arise as it intends to produce the same goods, but cheaper. He does not address the issue that it is hard for newly emerging competitors had higher costs in advertisement and production because all OAM suppliers were used to the prices set by the monopolist. There may be single success stories by renegade competitors who shake up cartelised or monopolistic markets, such as Bettr in Germany, which shook up the overpriced, cartelised mattress market (Brambusch, Jens (Jan. 11, 2019). Das große Geschäft mit den Matratzen. Capital Magazin: <https://www.capital.de/wirtschaft-politik/matratzenmarkt>), but those stories are few. How successful are Google Inc. alternatives like DuckDuckGo, Metapage, Bing, or Ecosia? They all share infinitesimal market shares, while the search engine pioneer remains uncontested. At some point, Mr. Greenspan also mentions ALCOA, a monopoly in the market for the production of primary aluminium, which by itself, he wrote, introduced cost-cutting initiatives and overall behaved non-coercively. Literature that was published on ALCOA's monopoly powers points towards a different direction, though: (Swan, P. L. (1980). Alcoa: The influence of recycling on monopoly power. *Journal of Political Economy*, 88(1), 76-99. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1086/260848>) In the end, it doesn't matter, because Greenspan didn't make a compelling argument anyway since he—either unintentionally or deliberately—oversaw the power monopoly powers carry and enact. His laconicism over the likes of Standard Oil and Rockefeller prove towards the latter; he knew that they distort the free-market competition, and since Google Inc. does the same, regulators finally decided that it had to be broken up to liberalise the browser market as Google Inc.'s Chromium engine was utilised on several independent browser operators like Microsoft (with its Edge browser) Opera and, of course, Google Inc.'s very own Chrome. (Liedtke, Michael (November 21, 2024). US regulators seek to break up Google, forcing Chrome sale as part of monopoly punishment. AP News: <https://apnews.com/article/google-search-monopoly-penalty-justice-department-84e07fec51c5c59751d846118cb900a7> . Even if one thought that the regulators of the government were not the ones who should be in charge of breaking up companies to equalise and revitalise the market competition

As a last voice from the days of aught, we shall hear from the other man of letters who contributed to the Federalist Papers, John Adams. Otherwise well-known for his “Defence of the Constitutions of the United States of America”, he has also written extensively about the threat of oligarchies as he read it, thanks also to his classical education, although the most compelling argument he brought up was based on his reading of Niccolò Machiavelli’s “Istorie fiorentine”, where the Italian politician and historian has analysed the Northern republic’s descent into tyranny by social élites<sup>25</sup>—a classic example of an oligarchy according to the ancient Greeks’ definition. And while Adams contradicted Machiavelli on the origin of oligarchic and otherwise tyrannic dysfunctions within the system, he has nonetheless emphasised the threat coming from “distinguished individuals and families” who would “threaten the constitutional order regardless of whether any formal nobility is recognized”<sup>26</sup>.

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<sup>25</sup> *“Quante volte ho io udito dolervi della avarizia de’ vostri superiori e della ingiustizia de’ vostri magistrati! Ora è tempo, non solamente da loro, ma da diventare in tanto loro superiore, ch’eglino abbiano più a dolersi e temere di voi che voi di loro. La opportunità che dalla occasione ci è porta vola, e invano quando la è fuggita, si cerca poi di ripigliarla. Voi vedete le preparazioni de’ vostri avversarii: preoccupiamo i pensieri loro; e quale di noi prima ripigliarà l’armi, senza dubbio sarà vincitore con rovina del nimico ed esaltazione sua: donde a molti di noi ne risulterà onore, e sicurezza a tutti. -- Queste persuasioni accendono forte i già per loro medesimim riscaldati animi al male, tanto che deliberano prendere le armi, poi ch’eglino avessero più compagni tirati alla voglia loro; e con giuramento si obligorono di soccorresi, quando accadessi che alcuno di loro fusse dai magistrati oppresso.”*

(Machiavelli, Niccolò (aut.); Martelli, Mario (Ed.) (1971). Istorie fiorentine. In: *Ibid.* (aut.) Ciliberto, Michele; Accendere, Pier Davide (2018 [1971]). Niccolò Machiavelli. Tutte le Opere. Roma: Bompiani. Pagina 702.)

There is a twofold way to read this: One in the fashion of what we are writing about here, and one that generally addresses the uprising of the lower classes against their oppressors. The quote is also interesting insofar as that it contradicts the move that the tech bosses have chosen when they cowered before the incoming president and, instead of countering him with their combined power against the authoritarian POTUS who has vowed to smother them if they didn’t bow before his commandments. There was more than one pundit who observed that what unites the three men—Bezos, Musk, Zuckerberg—is their spinelessness; that despite their amassed wealth and influence, they chose to do his bidding rather than rise up and rectify his misdirection.

<sup>26</sup> Mayville, Luke (2016). John Adams and the Fear of American Oligarchy. Princeton, Oxford: Princeton University Press. Page 44.

Approximately 200 years later, something comparable, although not akin, would finally emerge from the élite populace arrived at the White House.

Referencing the questions of money in politics again, Adams found it to be a root of inequality due to disadvantageous favouring of the wealthy over the poor, although he couldn't tell what would remedy such conditions—in the end, to tell someone that they couldn't run for office because their money gave them an unfair advantage over simple labourers would be hard to argue as affirmative action / positive discrimination before the Supreme Court. What he wrote was that

*“If, as a wealthy, ‘overbalancing’ gentry, the aristocracy could be the bane of popular government, its virtue and wisdom nonetheless made it ‘the very life and soul of it.’ The people, wrote Harrington, ‘have not only a natural but a positive obligation to make use of [them] as their guides.’ But it was critical that the few not hold power on account of their fortune alone, for although the wisdom of the few ‘may be the light of mankind... the interest of the few is not the profit of mankind, nor of a commonwealth.’”<sup>27</sup>*

If anything, that is the clearest opposition to anything that could be righteously called an oligarchy. But again, the question is what happened if someone who during his life earned a lot of money could be stopped from becoming a president, and even invite his other wealthy colleagues and counterparts to occupy cabinet positions. Remember that not only Donald J. Trump ran with a lot of cheddar at hand: Michael Bloomberg, founder of the Bloomberg Foundation, ran on the Democratic ticket, although unsuccessfully; so did Tom Steyer. Former POTUS Barrack Obama and his wife Michelle were able to land lucrative deals with book publishers and Netflix after the former left the White House. With the likes of LinkedIn's Reed Hoffman and Microsoft Inc.'s Bill Gates, they have got wealthy and well-known supporters. “Big Money” and politics cannot be separated anymore, as the view persists that without six-digit amounts of campaign funding, any campaign for office was bound to fail. Adams' rejection of education as a means to grow a meritorious class of future leaders is additionally disturbing, as his argument against it was that even education could not stop them from an ultimately disingenuous, or

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<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, page 81.

even tyrannical leadership once elected<sup>28</sup>. If that is his argument, there is only one way to go: To abolish any type of governance as a probable source of tyranny—a view which I would support but had no hope of finding popular support. We must therefore conclude that, while Adams had his heart in the right place, his arguments were just lukewarm and unfinished.

Before we will move on to assess whether Donald J. Trump is an oligarch or something else, we will have to also listen to those who have advised us to stay away from the foundation of a centralised republic and instead embrace either a federation of independent states or no supraordinate construct at all: The anti-Federalist, the assembly of lesser-known men of letters and Congressmembers who held influential speeches in critique of the then-unratified Constitution. They too were aware and suspicious of a probable oligarchy as well as other governmental ills but based on this chose to work against the advancements that were made daily during the Continental Congresses.

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<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, page 91.

## On Presidential Authorities

“οὐκ ἀγαθὸν πολυκοιρανίη: εἷς κοίρανος ἔστω,  
εἷς βασιλεύς, ᾧ δώκε Κρόνου πάϊς ἀγκυλομήτεω.  
σκήπτρόν τ’ ἡδὲ θέμιστας, ἵνα σφισι βουλευῇσι.”<sup>29</sup>

At this point, we must address the question of whether POTUS Donald J. Trump is an oligarch or not. And in order to achieve this, we need to look closer at the persons we have mentioned frequently beforehand who were provided as exhibits of the theory that he were: Mark Zuckerberg, Jeff Bezos, and, most importantly, Elon Musk, who is not only a donator to the Republican party’s electoral campaign, but even a governmental czar. Those three men will be split into two groups like a Skat round:

1. Jeff Bezos and Mark Zuckerberg in the first group, and
2. Elon Musk in the second group.

Why do we separate them in these two groups? The reason is obvious: The former two don’t hold public offices, while the latter does. What is more, Musk does not only hold a public office, but even gets a lot of work done; for the better or the worse, we will argue in a minute. But in order to assess whether either of those groups fit the model of modern oligarchs or not, we need to retrieve another image from beforehand: That of Russia during the fateful period of transition from the Soviet Union to what is today known as the Russian Federation. (Although I will henceforth resort to just calling it Russia, as I don’t perceive the federal states to enjoy an equal standing to the Большая Москва (Greater Moscow Area) or Петербург. Whether I am right or not is not up for debate here, as both names are legally correct) The schedule for this chapter therefore reads as follows:

1. Assessment of the three businessmen’s role in the second Trump administration, particularly that of Elon Musk as both CEO of TSLA, SpaceX, Neuralink, &c. due to his public role as a government czar and head of the “Department of Government Efficiency” (DOGE).
2. A definition of what constitutes a government czar, the title that first became known during the first Barack Obama administration in 2009.

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<sup>29</sup> Όμηρος, Ἰλιάς, II, l. 204-205.



### 3. The history of oligarchs in Russia.

Therefore, without further ado, let's get started.

Jeff Bezos is no longer CEO of AMZN, he hasn't been for a good amount of time. On 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2021, he announced that he would transition to "Executive Chair" by the Q3 2021 and hand over the reins of the online retail giant to his thitherto AWS CEO, Andy Jassy<sup>30</sup>. It doesn't change whatever we are writing about here, but it seemed to me as though the news did not reach the public mind, so that whenever Amazon is addressed for whatever reason, he is still understood to be the CEO; and while he still holds a firm grasp on his company as an executive chair, he doesn't pull the strings to a degree that a CEO would.

Why else is it important to mention it, aside of brushing off people's performative condemnation of insufficient workers' protection and fair payments, after ordering another frying pan at the online retailer's to keep their business afloat? It is important in the light of what Trump's drive could be to invite him instead of Jassy to his inauguration, and to even place him together with the other business honcho guests in the front row. Maybe Trump didn't know about the news either and nobody told him about it because whether he invited either of them or not didn't matter because any such invitation had a symbolic character at best. And the symbolism Trump wanted to convey is crystal clear: He wanted to show that throughout this presidency, he would place a focus on the economy; to overturn unfriendly policies that decelerated economic growth and to achieve the astonishing rates his Argentinian counterpart and brother-in-quiff Javier Milei achieved in his inflation-struck country, regardless of the conditions that led to even the feasibility of such rates. That's why he believes that tariffs could improve US businesses' global performance again, as he retaliated exploitative behaviour from foreign countries in Europe and East Asia; or at least that is what he iterated during his first appearance at the World Economic Forum (WEF) as POTUS in 2025<sup>31</sup>. We

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<sup>30</sup> Bezos, Jeff (Feb. 02, 2021). Email from Jeff Bezos to employees. About Amazon: <https://www.aboutamazon.com/news/company-news/email-from-jeff-bezos-to-employees>

<sup>31</sup> The White House (Jan. 23, 2025). REMARKS BY PRESIDENT TRUMP AT THE WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM. Link:

are not going to discuss whether he is right or wrong in his belief that tariffs were going to boost or injure the US economy as only time can tell in the long run, although the current prospect (09<sup>th</sup> February, 2025) shows that it will be a ball-and-chain to it, and function at best as a means of blackmail especially against inferior countries that will be brought to heel; the same way that Trump handles the issue of deporting migrants and assure that their original countries will receive them.

The reason why Trump would hire the CEO, past or present, of AMZN is clear too: The online retailer is one of the most successful corporations from the US, and the strongest adversary to the competing Chinese retailers Temu and Alibaba. It is furthermore the fifth-largest employer in the States. Aside of that, Bezos is a figurehead for both the proponents and apologetics of Capitalism, as well as its pariah for those who deem it to be the root of all evil, the scourge of mankind.

The second man is the CEO of Meta Inc., formerly the CEO of Facebook, the world's largest social media website perhaps aside of China, where it would be Weibo, or WeChat abroad. As Meta Inc., it could be described as the world's largest social media conglomerate, with Instagram and WhatsApp as two other masthead services of interconnectivity and a ubiquitous marketplace for the vanity fair. For him, the same rules apply: He was invited because he is a well-known figurehead, be that because his physiognomy ranked betwixt a corpse drained of all blood or an alien, or because he has become the pioneer of exposing the ills of permanent availability and anonymity as a means to lowering the inhibition threshold for bullying. This, too, nonetheless, will not be our focus, also because no-one is by law obliged to use any social media, let alone engage with strangers, particularly when it comes to controversial topics that are sure to enrage malleable individuals. As with Bezos, Zuckerberg's invitation was only about the symbolism it conveyed.

I have recently read an article about the habit of "flaking", i.e. turning down invitations last-minute because one didn't "feel" like attending an event that

one agreed to attend earlier. I have written about this habit elsewhere<sup>32</sup>, so that we don't need to delve into it now and instead focus on what I intend to ask: Why didn't Bezos and Zuckerberg respond to Trump apologising that they couldn't come because they had other obligations to honour. After all, one of them is a family man (Zuckerberg), whereas the other is a festivalgoer. What is even more interesting is that up until Trump has been reelected, neither one of the has come out as a particular firebrand supporter of either candidate, let alone the candidate who has stoked the most flames throughout the electoral campaign, during his first tenure, during his successor's tenure, &c. He has never been a candidate of reconciliation, unification and promoting a civil discourse, online and offline. Both men were prudent to stay out of the public debate and not take a stance for either one in order to not dip their user numbers. (Assuming that there were enough people who cared enough for either one's opinion to suddenly discontinue using their services) Only Mark Zuckerberg eventually deemed it smart to speak out against Joe Biden in the late stage of the electoral campaigns, when he said that under Biden, he had to disproportionately censor posts on Facebook. The reason, he said, was the distribution of fake news during the Covid-19 pandemic<sup>33</sup>. Zuckerberg, by means of this single statement, showed his staunch disregard for the problem of his social media platform functioning as a hotbed for disinformation about the pandemic, measurements to curb its outreach and leading figureheads of the debate in the United States and beyond<sup>34</sup>—think of then-head of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), Dr.

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<sup>32</sup> Bender, Oliver (Feb. 02, 2025). Thoughts on an article on “Flaking”. Rationalpolitik: <https://politique-rationale.blogspot.com/2025/02/thoughts-on-article-on-flaking.html#more>

<sup>33</sup> AP News (Aug. 27, 2024). Zuckerberg says the White House pressured Facebook over some COVID-19 content during the pandemic. Link: <https://apnews.com/article/meta-platforms-mark-zuckerberg-biden-facebook-covid19-463ac6e125b0d004b16c7943633673fc>

<sup>34</sup> Hossain, M.A., Chowdhury, M.M.H., Pappas, I.O. et al. Fake news on Facebook and their impact on supply chain disruption during COVID-19. *Ann Oper Res* 327, 683–711 (2023). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10479-022-05124-1>

Ittefaq, M. (2023). “It Frustrates Me Beyond Words That I Can't Fix that”: Health Misinformation Correction on Facebook During COVID-19. *Health Communication*, 39(12), 2647–2657. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10410236.2023.2282279>

Anthony Fauci, or simply the entire Biden administration—next to his opportunism to curry favours<sup>33</sup> with the likely victor of the next presidential election. Beforehand we have already mentioned that he knew about Trump’s hostile views against him, which led me to conclude that he behaved the same way that Bezos possibly did too: Muster an advantageous relation with him to avoid extrajudiciary repercussions by means of an instrumentalised Department of Justice (DOJ). As for the range he was implicitly expected to introduce on his platform, his strides were heavier than successful, as other studies have shown<sup>35</sup>. If we were precise, we had to mention that this was not even the first time that he expressed himself politically—when Proposition 238 was still on the table, he even sounded more reconciliatory and open to the government setting the rules under which content was ought to be moderated on social media. As he said, during a testimony before a Senate committee:

*“I believe we need a more active role for governments and regulators, which is why in March last year I called for regulation on harmful content, privacy, elections, and data portability. We stand ready to work with Congress on what regulation could look like in these areas. By updating the rules for the internet, we can preserve what’s best about it—*

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Oji, M. (2022). Conspiracy theories, misinformation, disinformation and the coronavirus: A burgeoning of post-truth in the social media. *Journal of African Media Studies*, 14(3), 439–453. DOI: [https://doi.org/10.1386/jams\\_00087\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1386/jams_00087_1)

<sup>35</sup> Broniatowski, D. A., Simons, J. R., Gu, J., Jamison, A. M., & Abrams, L. C. (2023). The efficacy of Facebook’s vaccine misinformation policies and architecture during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Science Advances*, 9(37), eadh2132. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1126/sciadv.adh2132>

Al-Zaman, M. S. (2021). Social media and COVID-19 misinformation: how ignorant Facebook users are?. *Heliyon*, 7(5). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2021.e07144>

Yang, A., Shin, J., Zhou, A., Huang-Isherwood, K. M., Lee, E., Dong, C., ... & Liu, W. (2021). The battleground of COVID-19 vaccine misinformation on Facebook: Fact checkers vs. misinformation spreaders. Harvard Kennedy School Misinformation Review. Link: <https://misinforeview.hks.harvard.edu/article/the-battleground-of-covid-19-vaccine-misinformation-on-facebook-fact-checkers-vs-misinformation-spreaders/>

Warnke, L., Maier, AL. & Gilbert, D.U. Social media platforms’ responses to COVID-19-related mis- and disinformation: the insufficiency of self-governance. *J Manag Gov* 28, 1079–1115 (2024). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10997-023-09694-5>

*the freedom for people to express themselves and for entrepreneurs to build new things—while also protecting society from broader harms.”*<sup>36</sup>

Bad mouths would argue that he didn’t show as much interest in cooperating with the government as much as he wanted to relay responsibilities from his own company to the government, or at least he wanted to be able to point fingers on the government in case any people were outrageous because their posts had to be removed because it violated company’s guidelines. Whatever the reason, it is always the government’s responsibility to place the banisters in such a way that order is maintained without infringing people’s liberties beyond the purpose of avoiding harm to others by the execution of one’s liberties. If anything, Zuckerberg had then spoken with a split tongue; if that was the case, I would give it a pass because he was ultimately right. And he couldn’t reasonably expect (or want) government agents to monitor his platform to look for harmful content. That would still be within his own purview.

What else does it show us? That he prepared well accustomed to the man whose inauguration he would attend later. Yet despite their brief efforts to show signs of alliance with Trump, both men have disappeared as quickly from the limelight as they appeared to exclaim their support. For once more at least, Bezos reaped further poor acclaim when he ordered *his newspaper*, the Pulitzer-prize winning Washington Post, to not publish an endorsement for the Democratic contestant Kamala Harris<sup>37</sup>. He didn’t do *his newspaper* a favour when he later penned an op-ed in which he argued that

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<sup>36</sup> Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook, Inc., Testimony for the Record for the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, “Does Section 230’s Sweeping Immunity Enable Big Tech Bad Behavior?” October 28, 2020. Unclassified. National Security Archive (GWU): <https://nsarchive.gwu.edu/document/25048-document-139-mark-zuckerberg-facebook-inc-testimony-record-senate-committee-commerce>. Page 2.

<sup>37</sup> Roig-Franzia, Manuel; Wagner, Laura (Oct. 25, 2024). The Washington Post says it will not endorse a candidate for president. The Washington Post: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/style/media/2024/10/25/washington-post-endorsement-president/>

A couple of days later, it was heard of several high-ranking resignations as some editors and journalists perceived this decision to be politically motivated and problematic especially in a year when emotions between both sides already ran high, no less because of Trump’s affiliation to the infamous “Project 2025”, whose lead author, Russ Vought, he appointed—

*“Presidential endorsements do nothing to tip the scales of an election. No undecided voters in Pennsylvania are going to say, ‘I’m going with Newspaper A’s endorsement.’ None. What presidential endorsements actually do is create a perception of bias. A perception of non-independence. Ending them is a principled decision, and it’s the right one. Eugene Meyer, publisher of The Washington Post from 1933 to 1946, thought the same, and he was right. By itself, declining to endorse presidential candidates is not enough to move us very far up the trust scale, but it’s a meaningful step in the right direction. I wish we had made the change earlier than we did, in a moment further from the election and the emotions around it. That was inadequate planning, and not some intentional strategy.”*<sup>38</sup>

There is a little to unpack here: First of all, if someone believes that a newspaper and its entire newsroom leaned towards a candidate, perhaps even their ideological and policy alignment, then they didn’t pay much attention not their overall coverage of issues, to what subjects they paid particular attention through in-depth and investigative articles, and what their other opinion articles state on issues. If they did, they would have noticed that in the best case—and it surely is like that at The Washington Post—a plurality of opinions is represented. You don’t judge a person only by the first appearance you earned from them, you get to know them better through further meetings and refine your comprehension of them. Bezos is therefore just as wrong as the audience he thinks is subscribed to the newspaper when he claims that endorsements created a “perception of bias”. One could also wonder who he discussed the decision

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and had confirmed by the Seante—as head of the OMB. I have written a little about some aspects of Project 2025, which you can read in the source mentioned in footnote № 7, pp. 52–63. Perhaps Bezos feared that publishing an endorsement for his contestant could beget him in the outcome of Trump’s victory, although he then didn’t fear for *his newspaper’s* survival as there is little reason to believe that he acquired for any other reason than others keep elks’ heads as game trophies on the wall of their living room: An accessory of prestige, and nothing besides. Otherwise, he would not have infringed Mr. William Lewis’ editorial independence by ordering the withdrawal of an opinion piece that is nothing more than a recommendation. He treats The Washington Post the same way that some celebrities treat “handbag dogs”: They want a canine pet, but without the burden of having a live-sized version of it.

<sup>38</sup> Bezos, Jeff (Oct. 28, 2024). The hard truth: Americans don’t trust the news media. The Washington Post: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2024/10/28/jeff-bezos-washington-post-trust/>. Underscores mine.

with that he came to believe that an endorsement corrupted a newspaper's trustworthiness. You could argue that sometimes, the borderlines between analyses and opinion pieces get a little blurry<sup>39</sup>, but this doesn't mean that a once-renowned newspaper suddenly transformed into another yellow paper like the Daily Mail or The Sun. The way Bezos presents it, he presumes obligations to fulfil by the newspapers that they simply cannot deliver because they must assume that the readers are reasonable individuals too. And all of this still excludes that he argued in bad faith to finally cave before Donald J. Trump by accommodating coverage to his liking.

The same, to an even crasser degree, applies to the *owner* of the Los Angeles Times, Patrick Soon-Shiong, withdrew an endorsement of Kamala Harris too<sup>40</sup>, although he not only doubled down later but even coupled the withdrawal with a new *feature* on the website: An AI-supported tool that would evaluate the level of bias an author expressed through an article<sup>41</sup>. If Mr. Soon-Shiong, a professed biomedical entrepreneur, had remembered anything from his studies and his field, assuming that this was a genuine attempt at providing more independent and transparent news coverage and journalism, he would have chosen the pathway that every academic journal goes, and obliged his staff to provide a section at the bottom of each report disclosing probable conflicts of interest<sup>42</sup>.

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<sup>39</sup> Miller, Eliana (July 15, 2020). Opinion, news or editorial? Readers often can't tell the difference. Poynter Institute: <https://www.poynter.org/reporting-editing/2020/opinion-news-or-editorial-readers-often-cant-tell-the-difference/>

<sup>40</sup> Rainey, James (Oct. 25, 2024). L.A. Times owner's decision not to endorse in presidential race sparks resignations, questions. Los Angeles Times: <https://www.latimes.com/business/story/2024-10-25/latimes-no-presidential-endorsement-decision-resignations>

<sup>41</sup> Jennings, Scott (Dec. 04, 2024). SPECIAL: Scott Jennings Hosts the Mike Gallagher Show - Hour 3 with Dr. Patrick Soon-Shiong and Speaker Mike Johnson. Flyover Country with Scott Jennings (via Podbean): <https://scottjenningsky.podbean.com/e/special-scott-jennings-hosts-the-mike-gallagher-show-hour-3-with-dr-patrick-soon-shiong-and-speaker-mike-johnson/>

<sup>42</sup> A couple of years ago, researchers tried to solve a similar question concerning journalists' trustworthiness and came up with an info box in which the authors could disclose to a permissible degree how they researched a story:

To think that an AI tool could mend such issues is disingenuous and nothing more than performative politics; a solution not a problem that didn't exist in the first place unless someone believed that anything and anybody who leant Democratic attempted to influence the public to smear Republicans as a whole and Donald J. Trump in particular for personal reasons; the opposite is never considered. I hereby presume that Mr. Soon-Shiong leans Republican, although I can neither confirm, nor deny the correctness of this statement. He has been the owner of the Los Angeles since 2018<sup>43</sup>, and in 2020, *his newspaper* endorsed Joe Biden over Donald J. Trump because "he practices civility, champions compromise and seeks unity in a country", whereas Trump "has divided with a cacophony of culture-war distractions."<sup>44</sup> He didn't begrudge that publication, so why now? That is what I want to address now, again with a theory of mine that will obviously show my bias that I didn't disclose anywhere and won't separately. I just assume that it shines through, although I also assume a reasonable reader who can also think for themselves.

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Masullo, G. M., Curry, A. L., Whipple, K. N., & Murray, C. (2021). The Story Behind the Story: Examining Transparency About the Journalistic Process and News Outlet Credibility. *Journalism Practice*, 16(7), 1287-1305.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2020.1870529>

In my opinion, both could be combined, or the section disclosing conflicts of interest would be reserved for opinion articles in case the authors didn't already paraphrase the information into the main text. Either way, it wouldn't hurt as long as no sensitive information were included; such are of course private and of no interest to the reader.

<sup>43</sup> tronc, Inc. (Feb. 07, 2018). tronc, Inc. Announces Sale of the Los Angeles Times and The San Diego Union-Tribune to Dr. Patrick Soon-Shiong for \$500 Million Plus the Assumption of \$90 Million in Pension Liabilities. Globe Newswire: <https://www.globenewswire.com/news-release/2018/02/07/1335389/0/en/tronc-Inc-Announces-Sale-of-the-Los-Angeles-Times-and-The-San-Diego-Union-Tribune-to-Dr-Patrick-Soon-Shiong-for-500-Million-Plus-the-Assumption-of-90-Million-in-Pension-Liabilities.html>

<sup>44</sup> The Times Editorial Board (Sep. 10, 2020). Endorsement: Joe Biden isn't just 'anybody but Trump.' He's the right fit for our polarized time. Los Angeles Times: <https://www.latimes.com/opinion/story/2020-09-10/biden-president-election-2020-los-angeles-times-endorsement>



When Bezos called for the withdrawal the endorsement of Kamala Harris for POTUS, this coincided, with a little period of time in between, with the annulation of the publication of a cartoon displaying Jeff Bezos, Mickey Mouse, Sam Altman of OpenAI, Mark Zuckerberg and Patrick Soon-Shiong kneeling before a statue of Donald J. Trump, some of them folding their hands, others handing him sacks of money. Their collective gesture likens that of people rendering homage to either a deity or a king, and when we think about it, that is what Trump, after all, expects of his fellowship, as I have also written about in a different text beforehand, with reference to books by Michael Wolffe and Bob Woodward, both of whom have always had exclusive access to both the White House and interns who work(ed) together with Trump during his first tenure<sup>45</sup>, full support, blind loyalty and no lectures on what could be the consequences of the fulfilment of his orders. In German, you would describe such expectations on the character of your staff as „soldatisches Verhalten“, a soldier-like behaviour. To him, it must have been a lesson from his first tenure, where he liked to hire five-star generals as he extolled their achievements, their clairvoyance, experience and the power they radiated. What he didn't expect them is to stand up to them and do their job, which his to brief him on issues and offer expert advice, even contradict him when he was about to issue a faulty command. In his second tenure's cabinet, he didn't make the same mistake and instead hire only those people he knew were dominantly unfit for the job and subordinate to a degree that they could be best described as a parcel of yes-sayers. As Theodor W. Adorno wrote:

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<sup>45</sup> Oliver Bender (Feb. 02, 2025), page 52–53.

John Bolton, Trump's former National Security Adviser, went one step further in saying that what Trump expects, despite his own formulation, was not loyalty, something that all POTUSes could righteously expect of their staff in order to prevent backstabbing and leaking of classified information to journalists, but fealty, “a feudal tenant's or vassal's sworn loyalty to a lord”, as per the OED. Bolton, one could argue, too had joined the bandwagon of people comparing Trump to either an authoritarian or even a self-styled monarch. To read his op-ed:

Bolton, John (Jan. 05, 2025). Presidents Expect Loyalty. Trump Demands Fealty. New York Times (NY Times): <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/01/05/opinion/trump-loyalty-cabinet-presidents.html>

*“Finally it should be mentioned that the only moral quality that plays a considerable role in the thinking of this subject is loyalty, perhaps as a compensation for his own lack of affection. By loyalty he probably means complete and unconditional identification of a person with the group to which he happens to belong. He is expected to surrender completely to his “unit” and to give up all individual particularities for the sake of the ‘whole.’”<sup>46</sup>*

Aptly, this portion of classification ran under the subordinate headline of the “manipulative type”, although manipulation required a little more susceptibility, which couldn’t be expected of the pathological ruffian Trump who grasps onto power and will tell everyone who applied for an office within his realm to either subordinate themselves devoutly or forget about a government job for the time of his tenure being. Still, the shoe for the above quote fits, especially the underscored part that outlines his understanding of serving for him. “Serving” fits as a root—if we picked up Bolton’s description of Trump’s staff’s prerequisite, we could also say that he expects medieval serfdom. His rule by decree is remarkable in its absolutism, just as the Senate’s silence on the behaviour and undermining of the republican principle is.

Now, coming back to the cartoonist whose caricature of CEOs’ subservience to the golden statue, we should ask ourselves one preliminary question: If it had been annulled, how do we know what it looks like? Because said cartoonist, Anne Telnaes, has shared a rough sketch of it on her personal blog, where she also spoke about the background of this annulation and its uniqueness<sup>47</sup>. In there, she wrote that while she understood that companies can expect devotion to the company’s values, she pointed out that news organisations like the Washington Post had a “public obligation” and were “obliged to nurture a free press in a democracy”. Conclusively, getting “in good graces with an autocrat-in-waiting” would only result in “undermining that free press”. What she missed is that while a press institution like the *Post* is not only a news magazine but also a

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<sup>46</sup> Adorno, Theodor W. Part IV - Qualitative Studies of Ideology. Chapter XIX - Types and Syndromes. In: Adorno, Theodor W.; Frenkel-Brunswick, Else; Levinson, Daniel J.; Sanford, R. Newitt (1950). *The Authoritarian Personality*. New York City: John Wiley & Sons. Pp. 770–771. Underscore mine.

<sup>47</sup> Telnaes, Ann (Jan. 04, 2025). Why I’m quitting the Washington Post. Open Windows - Ann Telnaes [via Substack]: <https://anntelnaes.substack.com/p/why-im-quitting-the-washington-post>

company that is responsible for paying freelancers and employees monthly salaries and secure their job. This doesn't strip them of their public responsibility of checking on the government and Congress as the "fourth estate"<sup>48</sup>. If you become a journalist, a publisher or an editor for a news or politics outlet, you have to be ready to take a beating or two from the authorities you check; as soon as you sell out to them by sugarcoating them, you sell your reputation and your personal authority as a journalist or journalistic publication. The argument presented by the chief editor—that "we had just published a column on the same topic as the cartoon and had already scheduled another column — this one a satire — for publication. The only bias was against repetition"<sup>49</sup>—appears like nothing more than a pretext. In the end, Trump was going to become the 47<sup>th</sup> president of the United States, and preluded with an authoritarian agenda that, as we see now, breaks loose with full force. To say that a second consecutive cartoon on the subject violated good editorial practice sounds ridiculous. We must therefore assume that Trump's threats showed effect and brought the head of one of the nation's largest broadsides to fall.

And this is one point to prove that Trump is not an oligarch, and that the businessmen who seek his proximity aren't either. He intimidates them to gain power over them, or to at least show them that he had it. In Russia, where an actual oligarchy exists, the president seeks their proximity not for intimidation's sake but so that they can be favoured in government contracts. Or perhaps my view is too limited to the Russian model, which itself developed over time after the Iron Curtain fell and Soviet businesses were privatised in the process. Many of the oligarchs of today, or former ones who since went into exile for becoming dissenters at risk of falling victim to the Kremlin's assassins, previously served in public offices before establishing businesses that filled gaps that opened after the fall of the Soviet Union, where some of those who didn't survive the privatisation wave didn't find immediate successors. The contacts they forged

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<sup>48</sup> Macknight, Thomas (1858). *History of the Life and Times of Edmund Burke*, vol. 1. New Haven (CT): Yale University Library. Page 462-467.

<sup>49</sup> Mullin, Benjamin (Jan. 03, 2025). *Washington Post Cartoonist Quits After Jeff Bezos Cartoon Is Killed*. New York Times:  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2025/01/03/business/media/washington-post-cartoonist-quits-after-jeff-bezos-cartoon-is-killed.html>

during their time as officials helped them later in achieving (near-)monopolist powers<sup>50</sup>. It is also due to these monopolistic powers that competition was never possible once Russia was about to evolve into something that could be called Capitalist. Because the Kremlin's cronies stepped in early, it was never possible to formalise, and so, instead of a Capitalist society that could have brought prosperity and wealth to the people, power and finances are concentrated well around the Muscovite periphery, figuratively speaking.

What is more striking and could, contrarily, function as proof that at least Elon Musk works as a *de-jure* oligarch, is that in a different text, one finds evidence that what distinguishes classical Russian oligarchs from US-American corporatists like Bezos and Zuckerberg is that those Russians are also politically involved insofar as that they can exploit their power and influence to run a parallel body politic; next to the actual government, they run their own operations, connecting with leaders and officials from former Soviet satellite states in Central Asia, like Chechnya, which today—represented by Рамзан Кадыров, the bearded militiaman with the Captain-Kangaroo haircut who sacrificed his brother and sent his sons to war in Ukraine—displays itself as a *de-jure* associated state of Russia despite its formal independence gained after the fall of the Soviet Union<sup>51</sup>. The power slope may be the most important factor when it comes to the usurpation of a government by oligarchs, as Russia ended up poor after the fall of the Soviet Union, an unfortunately level development, given the precarious state from which it set off. Despite the advantageous conditions in Russia, thanks to abundant natural resources and a flourishing industry as prepared by the founder of the USSR, Владимир И. Ленин, the

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<sup>50</sup> Guriev, Sergei, and Andrei Rachinsky. 2005. "The Role of Oligarchs in Russian Capitalism." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 19 (1): 138–139.

Anderson, L. (2016). Corruption in Russia: Past, present, and future. In *Political Corruption in Comparative Perspective* Routledge. Pp. 114–15.

<sup>51</sup> Granville, Johanna. "‘Dermokratizatsiya’ and ‘Prikhvatizatsiya’: the Russian kleptocracy and rise of organized crime." *Demokratizatsiya*, vol. 11, no. 3, summer 2003. Gale Academic OneFile, <https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A110458379/AONE>. Accessed 16 Feb. 2025. Pp. 451–453.

general, breakneck collectivisation impoverished the country<sup>52</sup> in such a way that the fall of the Iron Curtain, the independence of Soviet satellite states and the collective opening towards the West and bedevilled Capitalism raised hopes for major improvements in terms of living standards. What a letdown it must have been when the younger generations realised that they were being marooned by the Борис Ельцин government and his successor, Владимир Путин, received the magnates and tycoons.

One aspect that shone through the papers cited hereby hitherto point out that power gained through economic success as a business leader is a prerequisite to approach political leaders in such a way that it gave one the tools to influence their leadership. It gives them the power to incentivise certain policies. In one other paper, it is stylised as intentionally halting reformist efforts to manifest a status quo that, while disadvantageous to the general populace, is favourable to the business leaders who promote that policy<sup>53</sup>. The author unfortunately does not pick up the quote from Hellmann to explain in what way that happens, so that we as readers are left to decide for ourselves how they did it: Whether they just whispered it into the applicable political leader's ear to demand immediate introduction of respective bills into the Государственная Дума, where it would find approval as long as the Kremlin approves of it in the first place. Or if they bribe the officials to follow their bidding. Depending on the relationship, we could assume that either can happen: Bribes for those who are suspicious at first

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<sup>52</sup> Bakanov, S.A., Fokin, A.A. "Under Communism, We'll Have Everything...": State Planning of Living Standards for the Soviet Man by the Year 1980. *Her. Russ. Acad. Sci.* 92 (Suppl 10), S973-S982 (2022). <https://doi.org/10.1134/S1019331622160031>

Herlemann, H., & Murphy, S. (2019). *Quality of life in the Soviet Union*. Routledge. Pp. 16–19; 28–29; 32–34; 36–38; &c.

Laqueur, Walter (1994). *The Dream That Failed*. Oxford (UK): Oxford University Press. Pp. 58–59; 63–65; 135–137.

<sup>53</sup> Korzhov G. O. Oligarchy as a model of social organization in conditions of post-socialist transformation / G. O. Korzhov // Вісник Львівського університету. Серія соціологічна. - 2007. - Вип. 1. - С. 51-63. - Режим доступу: [http://nbuv.gov.ua/UJRN/Vlnu\\_sociology\\_2007\\_1\\_8](http://nbuv.gov.ua/UJRN/Vlnu_sociology_2007_1_8).

but can be convinced with a fistful of greenbacks (foreign exchange is of the essence when the domestic currency ranks amongst the least valuable)<sup>54</sup>.

The article by Korzhov cited beforehand draws a picture of oligarchy in Russia as a secluded environment, which ironically is described by Markus in the source cited last not even as destructive, as one would believe, since it is naturally competitive amongst the existing oligarchs. One must emphasise, for good measure, that in Russia, little could be destroyed at the moment, whereas in the United States, if indifferent, opportunistic business leaders like Elon Musk, it could (irrevocably, irreparably) corrupt Democracy. It was the late Alexandre de Tocqueville who, in his “Democracy in America”, wrote that

*“Among the men who have occupied power in France during the past forty years, several have been accused of having made a fortune at the expense of the State and its allies; a reproach that was rarely made to the public men of the old monarchy. But, in France, there is almost no example of someone buying the vote of an elector for money, while this is notoriously and publicly done in England. [In aristocracies corruption is generally exercised in order to gain power. In democracies it is linked to those who have gained power. So in democratic States corruption harms the public treasury more than the morality of the people. It is the opposite in aristocracies.] I have never heard it said that in the United States someone used his riches to win over the governed; but I have often seen the integrity of public officials called into question. Still more often I have heard their success attributed to low intrigues or to guilty maneuvers.”*<sup>55</sup>

In retrospect, M. de Tocqueville may have enjoyed the bliss of an early gaze upon a young and aspiring Democracy. Nowadays, money is a driving force in US politics in manifold ways: Congressmembers can make fortunes in office, the former VPOTUS Mike Pence was discovered by a business magazine as exemplar for the comfortable life Congressmembers live while representing

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<sup>54</sup> Markus, S. (2017). Oligarchs and Corruption in Putin’s Russia: Of Sand Castles and Geopolitical Volunteering. *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs*, 18(2), 26-32. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/26396016>.

<sup>55</sup> de Tocqueville, Alexis (aut.); Nolla, Eduardo (Ed.); Schleifer, James T. (trans.) (2010 [1990]). *Democracy in America*. Historical-Critical Edition of *De la démocratie en Amérique*. Indianapolis, IN: Liberty Fund. Pp. 357-58. Underscores mine.

their districts in “The Beltway”<sup>56</sup>. When one wants to run for office, one has to take off with a large wallet besides garnering donations large and small from the populace to continue running ads on TV, radio and the internet. Former Illinois Senator and 44<sup>th</sup> POTUS Barrack H. Obama has written about this travesty in one of his memoirs, “The Audacity of Hope”, where he wrote that

*“The amounts of money involved are breathtaking, particularly in big state races with multiple media markets. While in the state legislature, I never needed to spend more than \$100,000 on a race; [...] Our campaign plan called for a bare-bones budget, a heavy reliance on grassroots support and ‘earned media’—that is, an ability to make our own news. [...] My grant total came to \$500,000.”*<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Peterson-Withorn, Chase (Aug. 15, 2019). How Mike Pence Became A Millionaire From Government Pensions. Forbes: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/chasewithorn/2019/07/18/how-mike-pence-became-a-millionaire-from-government-pensions/#183eb5ce4835>

<sup>57</sup> Obama, Barack (2008 [2006]). The Audacity of Hope. Thoughts on Reclaiming the American Dream. London; Edinburgh; New York; Melbourne: Canongate Books. Pp. 109–110. And in case you wondered who is to blame for the gargantuan influx of money into electoral campaigns, the answer is: “Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission, 558 U.S. 310 (2010)”. For a short history of the ruling, the following paper gives a decent overview:

Smith, C. R. (2011). The Evolution of Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission. *Free Speech Yearbook*, 45(1), 131–140. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08997225.2011.10556372>

The question is whether the amount of money that makes it into the electoral campaign and therefore creates unfair disadvantages who do not enter politics without a certain amount of personal capital could be capped. In my opinion, there couldn’t be a satisfactory answer to this question because any number had to be arbitrary. One could either allow money into the show, and allow everyone to throw money at the screen, or they would prohibit it altogether; any middle way would eventually stop some of those who would like to support their favourite candidate from doing so. The problem is that it has gotten a little out of hand in the United States, with entrepreneurs and so-called dark-money groups backing candidates at all cost, something that is also possible in Germany, but doesn’t exist to that extent. For example, when ahead of the 2025 parliamentary election, there were three separate donations from different individuals to the AfD, all of which were more than a million Euros, as we have spoken about beforehand<sup>20</sup>. As it was also mentioned in that footnote, there are the donations to the Marxist-Leninist MLPD, which are regular to the extent that no-one cares about it, also because the party has never made it above even 0.5 percent, showing that money is not all it takes to win an election, no matter how often this is brought up as an argument. Money doesn’t buy you votes in a Democratic country. The US is just a very special country where

What we need to know is that those are information from his time as a candidate for a statewide Senate seat. At the time, he was still walking down the pathway of Abraham Lincoln during the early stages of his political career, and on the other side of the aisle. Now imagine how much he had to spend when he was running for president, a couple of years later. After you have made up a number in your mind, check the website “Open Secrets” for the concrete amount: His campaign in 2012 spent a whopping US\$ 738,503,770 during the 2012 campaign. Now, only a little was funnelled in from his personal finances, that would not be allowed anyway. But it also shows how high the stakes are that determine whether someone can succeed in running for the nation’s highest office or not. From this perspective, one can also imagine how surprising Jimmy Carter’s victory must have been, given that he built his campaign upon his humble abodes as a peanut farmer from Plains, GA. Obama furthermore wrote that he was lucky to receive a couple of valuable Illinois endorsements from state officers, which adds another factor into the chances of one’s run for office: Renowned supporters. Now that is a factor we can accept as political, social, a matter of networking before running for office. It shows that politics, after all, are simply institutionalised human interactions; one needs to curry favours with one’s peers, with the electorate, to not only make stark promises but also fulfil them throughout the tenure and to bridge the gaps between political parties to earn a head start before competitors within one’s own party and the adversary party. Outside of “ruby red” or “blue-wave” districts or even states, this is just politics 101. Nothing new.

In an oligarchic system, the pathway to a political office looks a little different, as described in Korzhov text. He describes the above-mentioned “competitive oligarch environment” in the shape of clans, although they have got little to do with the Scottish clans, where they describe competing families like the Stuarts or Hannays. Instead, as he describes it, it is “defined by Dinello as a ‘particularistic and cohesive network of trust and reliability that is dense and

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everything, like in Australia, seems a few times greater. As for the question of whether SuperPACs could be capped, read the following paper:

Alschuler, A. W., Tribe, L. H., Eisen, N. L., & Painter, R. W. (2017). Why limits on contributions to super PACS should survive *Citizens United*. *Fordham L. Rev.*, 86, 2299. Perm. Link: <https://heinonline.org/HOL/LandingPage?handle=hein.journals/flr86>



tightly interlinked, hierarchical, and non-transparent. [...]’.”<sup>58</sup> That could describe a lot of dark-money groups that are known to finance favourable candidates<sup>59</sup>, some of them were also said to be involved with having January 6 Capitol Hill Insurrectionists or their supporters incumbent in Congress<sup>60</sup>.

On page 54, the author mentions that those oligarchic clans foster their clientele, again within their secluded environment, which in turn creates a “sense of belonging”. This would still not be as interesting as what he wrote in the closing of the paragraph: He wrote that those oligarchs benefited from a state of anomalie. I find the use of this word gratuitous insofar as instead of this correct term, many—including the aforementioned Tocqueville—tend to use the

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<sup>58</sup> G. O. Korzhov (2007), page 53.

<sup>59</sup> The “Oxford Dictionary of Politics” contains a definition for interest groups with an interesting portion on inside and outside groups:

*“The distinction between insider groups and outsider groups draws a line between those groups that are regularly involved in the formulation of policy by ministers and civil servants, and those that have to rely on other methods of securing support such as letter-writing campaigns and demonstrations.”*

(Grant, Wyn (auth.); Brown, Garret Wallace; McLean, Iain; McMillan, Alistair (Eds.) (2018). The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Politics and International Relations, Fourth Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press. P. 282)

Dark-money groups could be counted in to the insider groups not only because they are often not obliged to disclose their donations due to gaps in the legislation, and even if they disclose them, they donate through a thick web of organisations and companies, comparable to the letterbox companies based in tax oases, some of which were exposed in the “Panama Papers” scandal.

<sup>60</sup> Faulkner, Meghan; Osuga, Miru (May 28, 2021). Senate opponents of democracy reform were elected with millions in dark money. Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (CREW): <https://www.citizensforethics.org/reports-investigations/crew-investigations/senate-opponents-of-democracy-reform-were-elected-with-millions-in-dark-money/>

Massoglia, Anna (July 22, 2022). ‘Dark money’ group that helped sponsor Jan. 6 rally saw its revenue boom. Open Secrets: <https://www.opensecrets.org/news/2022/07/dark-money-group-that-helped-sponsor-jan-6-rally-saw-its-revenue-boom/>

Vandewalker, Ian (June 16, 2022). The Money Behind January 6 Is Flowing into the 2022 Elections. Brennan Center for Justice: <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/analysis-opinion/money-behind-january-6-flowing-2022-elections>

word “Anarchism”, seemingly unaware of what this word means. I plan to write a text on that subject separately, but for now, we shall rely on another definition from the “Oxford Dictionary of Politics”:

*“The view that society can and should be organized without a coercive state. This specialized usage of the word differs markedly from common usage, which takes anarchism as a synonym for moral and political disorder. This pejorative usage is as old as the Greek origins of the word.”*<sup>61</sup>

Another author picked up the definition of the term “anarchy”, where a similar point is made, but the point is clear from the start: It does not mean that there will be chaos the moment the central authority dissolves. One had to assume that humankind only held together because there were centralised organisation that coördinated our shared actions. That’s when we entered the Hobbesian realms, which would mean that we had to ask ourselves why we could trust someone of our own to lead the way, since we do not require special training for our nation’s or community’s highest leaders. How would such training look like? Like studies of “Business Administration”? Depending on what would be taught in such a leadership training, the question is whether we couldn’t teach our children to be more empathetic, compassionate and sympathetic towards the needy in our society—the children (i.e. themselves), the elder, the sick, &c. Altogether, the presumption of leadership in a society that consequentially ended up hierarchical appears a lot like an easy way out of a complex question, or the reliance on preëxisting conditions.

But this is not of interest in this text and will therefore be stopped right away. In the end, we do not even speak about workable conditions in which we enjoyed the luxury of contemplating even more ideal conditions as if we were sophists in the Athenian lyceum. Russians would be content living in a barely Democratic society, rather than following their predecessors’ tradition of being suppressed in any way, whether that be under a Socialist dictator, a czar, or a king.

As a last reference to this text, we shall take a look at the three points Korzhov identified as determiners for an oligarchic system of governance (page 58):

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<sup>61</sup> Bufacchi, Vittorio (auth.); Brown, Garret Wallace; McLean, Iain; McMillan, Alistair (Eds.) (2018). The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Politics and International Relations, Fourth Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press. P. 16.

1. An omnipresent state in the economy and society;
2. A weak rule of law and a lacking legal consciousness within both the government and society;
3. “The underdevelopment of civil society and NGOs, the weakness of civil society institutions and value orientations, norms, and behavioral practices concomitant with civil society.”

There is nothing to add to those three points, although one could wonder whether those points were even applicable to the United States. The answer must be: No. The US' Constitution, based on the Founding Fathers' reading of John Locke's "Treatises on Government", was seminal within its field and led the way for many future independent nations in the composition of their own Constitutions. Hitherto, courts checked upon the president's actions as Congress is both inhibited from doing so due to a lack of power within the hands of the opposition party and the president's party's complacency in the frequent attempts to break the rule of law. Because of the latter, one could believe that indeed, the second point now fit the States. I would only agree in part, because it only matches the ruling party, not the opposition party, and so far, despite all impairments by means of discontinuing funding and an increasing implicit vilification, it remains strong and ready for the fray. Even the most hard-wired Supreme Court justices, in the worst case, would try their best to show him his limits. One could criticise their decision-making, i.e. the justices'<sup>62</sup>, they still maintain the rule of law in their country while the Executive is on the verge of abandoning it. In Russia, they had a brief chance after Михаил Горбачёв resigned and handed over the reins of to perhaps the most famous Russian alcoholic in a presidential office, Борис Ельцин. Researchers usually speak about a transitional period, which makes sense, but what they outlined shows why the transition from Socialism to Capitalism failed in an instance. It also shows how important it was that after Germany's defeat in WW II, the whole country was divided into gubernatorial sectors and a Constitution was composed for a future

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<sup>62</sup> ... Especially when it comes to rulings based on obsolete English law that has got no footing in the world as we know it today:

Armstrong, Ken (May 06, 2022). Draft Overturning Roe v. Wade Quotes Infamous Witch Trial Judge With Long-Discredited Ideas on Rape. ProPublica:  
<https://www.propublica.org/article/abortion-roe-wade-alito-scotus-hale#1325809>

Democratic society. In Russia, they relied on their Soviet Constitution, with the expectable outcome:

*“At the time of Russia’s independence, the office of the presidency had only recently been grafted onto the Soviet-era constitution, but the division of power between the various branches of government was anything but clear. Faced with an intransigent, Communist-dominated parliament that was strongly opposed to economic reform, Yeltsin was forced to rule by decree. Following an attempt to impeach Yeltsin, the President dissolved parliament in September 1993 in violation of the existing constitution. In response, parliament impeached Yeltsin, replaced him with Vice-President Alexander Rutskoy, and appointed new ministers of defense, security, and interior. Effectively, Russia functioned with two dueling governments, both claiming constitutional legitimacy for a brief period in September 1993.”*<sup>63</sup>

What followed thereafter should be in everybody’s mind, it is one of the incidents that resembled what the Soviet Union did in Magyarország, and what is only being defended by the kind of people we nowadays call “tankies”. But this will not bother us since no oligarchs were involved in that incident. Instead, we should commemorate how the only thing that the Государственная Дума ought to have done was to initiate discussions for a new Constitution suitable for post-Soviet Russia, in order to avoid conditions as they were met in 1993, with stalemates that led to the president taking over power like Donald J. Trump would do in 2025 without a Congressional stalemate. Compare the two of them: Елцин wanted to perform economic reforms to avoid a major impoverishment across Russia, but knew that the Communists, who held a veto majority within parliament would not carry along with him, and at worst stalemate all work, so that he needed to evade such a stonewall by decrees, disregarding that the Государственная Дума could perceive this as an attempt at overthrowing their authority. President Trump, on the other hand, maintains a convenient majority at least until the midterm elections in 2027, yet he signs innumerable Executive Orders (EOs) whose only review will be conducted by the courts—the same courts that his VPOTUS J. D. Vance and his White House Press Spokesperson Karoline Leavitt allege of threatening a “Constitutional Crisis” or their

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<sup>63</sup> Anderson, L. (2016). Corruption in Russia: Past, present, and future. In *Political Corruption in Comparative Perspective*. Routledge. Page 116. Underscores are mine.

authority to check upon the President, as if it weren't already the law that EOs were checked by the courts later on<sup>64</sup>. (it at least enjoys the authority to block

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<sup>64</sup> Price, Michelle L.; Whitehurst, Lindsay; Megerian, Chris (Feb. 13, 2025). White House says it's the judges — not Trump — causing a 'constitutional crisis'. AP News: <https://apnews.com/article/trump-judges-rulings-constitutional-crisis-presidential-power-a9c593cf3f9faec23a03f4a5123fefdb>

The Office of Connecticut Attorney General William Tong (Feb. 14, 2025). Statement of Attorneys General Regarding the Vice President's Comments on Judicial Review on February 9, 2025. Link: <https://portal.ct.gov/ag/press-releases/2025-press-releases/statement-of-attorneys-general-regarding-the-vice-president>

Federal Judicial Center (last time checked: Feb. 16, 2025). Judicial Review of Executive Orders. Link: <https://www.fjc.gov/history/administration/judicial-review-executive-orders>

It is a rather curious admonition against one of the governmental branches, the pillar upon which any Democratic government rests when it maintains an orderly balance of power and checks and balances. To assail it in such a way without subsequent sanctions from equal powers, e.g., the Congress, doesn't bode well for the long-term future. But aside of the obvious, we should also ask ourselves how in fact a court of any level, from the federal to the Supreme, could initiate a crisis? In the end, courts are as fragile as a porcelain shop, as they hold no power other than to opine and express verdicts. In the end, they bear no power to enforce their rulings, they rely on equal or subordinate organs of the governmental system to convert their words into action. It is an issue that the seventh POTUS, Andrew Jackson, gleefully pointed out in one of his letters, in which he wrote that

*"The decision of the supreme court has fell still born, and they find that it cannot coerce Georgia to yield to its mandate, and I believe Ridge has expressed despair, and that it is better for them to treat and move."*

(Jackson, Andrew (aut.); Spencer Basset, John (Ed.) (1929). Correspondence of Andrew Jackson, vol. IV - 1829-1832. Washington D.C.: Carnegie Institution of Washington. Page 430.)

One must also mention that despite all the flak that I will target at the Federalists, one of them was able to foresee that the judiciary branch were essentially defenceless in the face of its rulings' enforcement. As Alexander Hamilton noted in Federalist No 78, the judiciary is "the judiciary is beyond comparison the weakest of the three departments of power; that it can never attack with success either of the other two", the latter by which he meant the government and the Constitution. And even though he recognised the courts' weakness before the government which, as it was known already, needed to check upon as an extended arm of Congress, he did not make the least effort of protecting the judiciary branch from harassment from the Executive Branch. And the aftermath, we can watch now in live transmission.

Besides the system of presidential appointments to the states' and nation's bars, the general lack of judiciary fortification is another issue that unnecessarily weakens said governmental pillar: Ever since President Trump has begun his onslaught against his own government, the people in the feuillets and comment sections have asked: What if Trump simply ignored a ruling against him? It is a valid question for reasons we (will have) elaborate(d) in great detail throughout this text: He doesn't care for the rule of law if it stands in his predisposed way of achieving his goals, and he knows that there will be no significant pushback from either his party or the governmental system he violates ubiquitously. We can assume that he hasn't yet acted in such a way to this day (March 15, 2025) because he may enjoy the game he is playing, which consequently means that, like a little boy, he will throw it away in an instant the moment it starts to bore him. Until then, we must hope that either Democrats will awake from their Rip van Winkle sleep, or that Republicans will consider living up to their party's name again, and stand up for Republican principles.

It didn't take too long from me writing the above passage to President Trump delivering an apt example of Andrew Jackson's allusion to authoritarianism in action. In between March 16 and 17, 2025, he has overrun two judges' rulings with reference to cases of deportations of green card holders. We are talking about the following two cases, and I will name the apparent ruling the President overran next to the news article's link for those who may be interested in reading what the judges had to say:

Riccardi, Nicholas; Cano, Regina Garcia (March 17, 2025). Trump administration deports hundreds of immigrants even as a judge orders their removals be stopped. AP News: <https://apnews.com/article/trump-venezuela-el-salvador-immigration-dd4f61999f85c4dd8bcaba7d4fc7c9af> (ignoring a prior ruling by D. C. district judge James E. Boasberg under the following citation: J.G.G. v. TRUMP, 1:25-cv-00766, (D.D.C.))

Raymond, Nate (March 17, 2025). Doctor at Brown University deported to Lebanon despite US judge's order. Reuters: <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/doctor-brown-university-deported-lebanon-despite-us-judges-order-2025-03-16/> (ignoring a prior ruling by Massachusetts district judge Leo T. Sorokin under the following citation: Chehab v. Noem et al., 1:25-cv-10614-LTS)

And now we scramble to answer such an unprecedented act again, and conclude that our hands are tied because, as I noted beforehand, courts lack the powers to sanction the ignorance of their rulings on political bases. Of course, they cannot expect all of their rulings to be converted literally into action, but in this case, it was not even given consideration. But what good is a man of letters and oration who has to deal with a President who doesn't like others meddling into his work? There is little reason to consider his supporters' comments on such actions when their arguments are, to quote Iowa Senator Chuck Grassley, "Another day, another judge unilaterally deciding policy for the whole country". From day one, for his information, President Trump has done the same by means of decrees and undermining

Congressional authority, all the while he has, as we could read recently, bullied judges presiding over cases concerning his Executive Orders and policies internally:

Riccardi, Nicholas (March 16, 2025). Trump administration ramps up rhetoric targeting the courts amid mounting legal setbacks. AP News: <https://apnews.com/article/trump-courts-judges-rule-of-law-85058a5ffce105d4ea2ce0ef078f084>

And this has in turn led to ripple effects amongst his supporters who have replicated a behaviour we were already able to observe during his first tenure: That they would start harassing said presiding judges online, intimidating them as well as their families:

Schwartz, Matthias; VanSickle, Abbie (March 19, 2025). Judges Fear for Their Safety Amid a Wave of Threats. New York Times: <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/03/19/us/trump-judges-threats.html>

Scibetta, Gabriela (July 29, 2021). Are Judges' Safety at Risk? The Increase in Personal Threats Prompts the Introduction of the Daniel Anderl Judicial Security and Privacy Act. Social Media Legality [via Pace University]: <https://socialmediablwg.blogs.pace.edu/2021/07/29/are-judges-safety-at-risk-the-increase-in-personal-threats-prompts-the-introduction-of-the-daniel-anderl-judicial-security-and-privacy-act/>

It is a recurring theme throughout his two-part presidency: The utilisation of intimidation as a means to bring opponents, adversaries and generally his opposites to heel. Despite calling himself “the greatest dealmaker in the world” and having a book on “the Art of the Deal” ghostwritten under his name, he does not know anything about dealmaking, negotiations and convincing others of the goodness and superiority of a deal he presented to them. As I have never been or lived in New York City, I cannot tell how he continued the real estate business he inherited from his father, but if he practised his business the way he practises the political one, I understand that he needed a mob lawyer like Roy Cohn to represent him in court: No-one else would lack the self-esteem to represent a man like him, despite the name recognition.

Speaking of intimidation as a means to bring foreshorn enemies to heel, this is not limited to institutionalised adversaries such as incumbent judges: The earlier past has shown that it ranges as far as non-governmental jurisprudential practitioners too: One such practitioner is the law firm Perkins Coie LLP which committed the inexcusable sacrilege of once representing then-presidential contender Hillary R. Clinton. During his second tenure, President Trump picked up the opportunity to prosecute the law firm for that, although in his announcement (<https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/03/addressing-risks-from-perkins-coie-llp/>) he claimed that the law firm allegedly discriminated against white applicants, an argument that rings as hollow as the allegations against the South African government that allegedly expropriated white farmers at will and without substantiated reasons. We to this day await the President's evidence for the allegation he raises against the law firm whose lawsuit is listed under the citation “PERKINS COIE LLP v. U.S.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, 1:25-cv-00716, (D.D.C.)”. To read a summary of the process as a whole, one shall be referred to the following news article:

Schmidt, Michael S. (March 12, 2025). Trump’s Revenge on Law Firms Seen as Undermining Justice System. New York Times:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2025/03/12/us/politics/trump-law-firms-perkins-coie.html>

Although the last above-iterated statement is a little distorting in hindsight. It is not the Trump administration that has filed the last lawsuit in the ongoing duel between the government and the law firm, but the latter itself, because of an Executive Order that, without any proportionality, was filed against them, again for the alleged racism against white applicants and in actuality because they had the gall to pick up the former Democratic Senator from New York City and Secretary of State under President Barack Obama as a client:

Henry, Justin; Strom, Roy (March 11, 2025). Perkins Coie Sues Trump Administration Over Executive Order (3). Bloomberg Law: <https://news.bloomberglaw.com/business-and-practice/perkins-coie-sues-trump-administration-over-executive-order>

This is a good point to remember what we will have read later on about the President’s authorities as laid out in *Youngstown Sheet and Tube v. Sawyer* (1952)<sup>73</sup>, in which it was written, inter alia, that “The President’s power, if any, to issue the order must stem either from an act of Congress or from the Constitution itself.” Under this consideration, to use this power to instigate harassment from atop the country for personal reasons alone must be considered an abuse of power. Not to say that it is the DOJ’s authority to conduct trials against entities, which the aforementioned Executive Order was meant to do anyway.

Foreshadowing things to come during this second tenure, it went downhill from there. The district court of the District of Columbia has issued a status report (Perkins Coie LLP v. U.S. Department of Justice, Case 1:25-cv-00716-BAH (D.D.C.) ordering the DOJ to stop the heinous lawsuit brought forward against the law firm, which the DOJ responded to with indifference and a belief that the lawsuit bore harassment, hence would proceed (<https://storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.dcd.278290/gov.uscourts.dcd.278290.32.1.pdf> (PDF, 236 KB)). This is where things stood the last time I have checked, and no matter how this is going to continue, this case will have manifested a tolerance for the presidential office’s breaching of power. The President hereby utilises his utmost power to harass a boutique law firm for the representation of a disliked contestant during a presidential race. It is bullying at a wholly new scale, something that lets Richard Nixon and Watergate look like the harassment of Massachusetts Senator Edmund Muskie’s campaign in the 1960’s (Albright, Madeleine; Woodward, Bill (auts.); Jendricke, Bernhard; Wollermann, Thomas (trans.) (2020). *Die Hölle und andere Reiseziele*. Köln: DuMont Buchverlag. Pp. 89–92). If this becomes the norm, there is good reason to kiss Democracy goodbye once and for all. It will also depend on President Trump’s party’s response to such behaviour: Whether they will, as Iowa Senator



EOs temporarily until its legality has been proven) For some journalists and other authors, the Constitutional crisis is already here<sup>65</sup>, although I would disagree with that: Until the courts have been dismantled, their authority entirely undermined, the crisis has been averted. It doesn't mean that the danger were henceforth eliminated, it still lingers in plain sight, but it has not yet mauled Democracy. Compare this to countries like Russia or mainland China, where parliaments are nothing but suited yes-sayers who are presented with draft legislation they are ordered pass on—dissent could end the political career. Needless to say, within the GOP, similar mechanisms are already in charge<sup>66</sup>, although that is something happening within a party, and not within Congress. Within their party, they can do what they want and as they please, but they cannot impose those mechanisms onto the rest of the US body politic.

The upshot of the ЕЛЦИН era was that the president bore the power to arbitrarily pass laws, which in his particular case ended up amounting juxtapositional legislation that no-one could check upon, meaning that the Russians had to deal with a mad king atop<sup>67</sup>. Last but not least, we have got one considerable factor we have not yet mentioned in the realm of what distinguished Russian oligarchy from a probable US-American: The nationalisation of the industries that will analogously spawn oligarchs who connect with the incumbent president, whether that be Путин or his successor—Песков, Медведев, or an android version of the former if transhumanism achieved a viable state before he met his certain demise. But altogether, it was Путин who has developed the Russian oligarchy as we know it today, and except for one dissenting oligarch—Ходоровский—there are none he ever had to

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Chuck Grassley, condone such actions, or whether they will step up the plate and condemn it as inappropriate, unprecedented and, finally, unpresidential.

<sup>65</sup> The New York Times Editorial Board (Feb. 13, 2025). Trump Dares the Courts to Stop Him. New York Times: <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/02/13/opinion/trump-constitutional-crisis.html>

<sup>66</sup> Goldsmith, B. E., & Moen, L. J. (2025). The personality of a personality cult? Personality characteristics of Donald Trump's most loyal supporters. *Political Psychology*, 46(1), 225-243. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/pops.12991>

<sup>67</sup> Anderson, L. (2016). Corruption in Russia: Past, present, and future. In *Political Corruption in Comparative Perspective*. Routledge. Pp. 118–19.

persecute, and it doesn't look as if there were any serious challengers to his rule altogether, including the conspiracy with the oligarchs under cahoots<sup>68</sup>. In the US, there is a legal precedence that bars presidents from nationalising businesses, perhaps with the exception of nationalisations with a Congressional approval<sup>69</sup>. Now we have seen that Republicans of today proved to be true turncoats who abandoned their principles when the Executive told them to—we didn't even need to wait for them to hear another order from Mar-a-Lago, one had to only follow Republican Congressmembers' remarks and memoranda during the Obama presidencies, and compare it to their work during his predecessors' tenures. I am talking of course about the Bush presidencies, all of them<sup>70</sup>. But would they approve of nationalisations without a cogent argument? It is clear that Trump couldn't present one—the argument he already presented for a reinforcement of border security, that there were an ongoing crisis and that America were being flooded with immigrants is worth zilch<sup>71</sup> and are only believed by those who want to believe him, and blindly so, which brought us back to John Bolton's emphasis that Trump did not expect loyalty, but fealty. He indeed lives by the old Anglo-Saxon oath:

*“By the Lord, before whom this relic is holy, I will be to Donald J. Trump faithful and true, and love all that he loves, and shun all that he shuns, according to God's law, and according to the world's principles, and never, by will nor by force, by word nor by work, do ought of what is loathful to him; on condition that he keep me as I am willing to deserve, and all that fulfil that our agreement was, when I to him submitted and chose his will.”*<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 120–125.

<sup>69</sup> Coenen, M., & Sullivan, S. M. (2021). The Elusive Zone of Twilight. *BCL Rev.*, 62, 741. Perm. Link: <https://heinonline.org/HOL/LandingPage?handle=hein.journals/bclr62> . Pp. 757–68.

<sup>70</sup> Krugman, Paul (Feb. 06, 2020). The Triumph of Fiscal Hypocrisy. *New York Times*: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/06/opinion/economy-republicans-deficit.html>

<sup>71</sup> The Marshall Project (Oct. 21, 2024). Fact-checking Over 12,000 of Donald Trump's Statements About Immigration. Link: <https://www.themarshallproject.org/2024/10/21/fact-check-12000-trump-statements-immigrants>

<sup>72</sup> To be precise, the oath is part of “The Laws of Alfred, Guthrum, and Edward the Elder”, the former and latter who were predecessors of the better-known king Æthelred II. Useless

Yet until we see the first Republicans approving of intrinsically Socialist legislation, like the nationalisation of formerly private businesses, which even during wartime would be impermissible for someone who cherishes the benefits of a free market—the aforementioned ruling, *Youngstown Sheet & Tube Co. v Sawyer*, 343 U.S. 579 (1952), technically dealt with this issue alone, and henceforth served as an exemplar ruling inhibiting governmental overreach<sup>73</sup>.

In conclusion for this chapter, we could say that at first glance, it doesn't seem as if the US were underway to become an oligarchy, if we used Russia as an example of what constituted an oligarchy. I say until now, because we have so far not really addressed Tesla CEO Elon Musk and his work in the “Department of Government Efficiency”, which we called just DOGE heretofore and will call just by its abbreviation for brevity's and legibility's sake. On a more argumentative basis, we will also prove that its “GE” part is nothing but marketing without value. Disregarding all existing and partially well-known information, the Trump/Vance/Musk triad came closer to a Milei-like Libertarian overhaul programme, where the prime issues were the shrinkage of the government and the deliberate opprobrium of critics, most of them located to the left side of the aisle. With more information, for what we can tell now, on the 16<sup>th</sup> February 2025, it comes closer to said opprobrium of critics, but also the Libertarian pursuit of imploding government altogether. But to this, we will come in the next subchapter.

Because Musk's appointment is unprecedented in US legal history, we cannot find any law or statute explicitly addressing the appointment of someone in an opaque position. It is true that the President is permitted to delegate work to subordinates<sup>74</sup>, but only to existing agencies. As we have mentioned beforehand, DOGE did not exist until he called it into existence. This kneejerk

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information, I know, but I found it worthy of mentioning anyway. As for the oath itself, I would not be surprised if Trump, if he were serious with his plans to declare himself the States' first dictator, he would implement the Anglo-Saxon oath as an ersatz for the Pledge of Allegiance.

<sup>73</sup> Tankersley, H. R. (1952–1953). Presidential Power Reexamined in Light of *Youngstown v. Sawyer*. 2 Am. U. Int. L. Rev. 31. Perm. Link: <https://heinonline.org/HOL/LandingPage?handle=hein.journals/aulr2>

<sup>74</sup> 5 U.S.C §7301, sec. 401

introduction into government—or next to it—keeps its status intransparent. We could read in Trump’s applicable Executive Order that it was an agency, and briefly cited what an agency is according to standing law. Technically, if that is its status, it would not be legally required to be authorised by Congress but only by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB)<sup>75</sup>, the office run by the lead author and editor of the Heritage Foundation’s “Project 2025”, Russ Vought<sup>76</sup>. So, there was no opposition to be expected, given that Musk’s and Vought’s views on the slashing of staff particularly in terms of removing presumably insubordinate staff and such who were appointed under DEI regulations allegedly coercing offices to employ someone solely for the purpose of fulfilling quotas, independent of the new staff’s qualifications for a job<sup>77</sup>. (Which also shows his lack of understanding of the employment process) But does an agency require, or can even expect, access to sensitive data handled by other departments? The answer must be a resounding No, because it is an agency, although even that status remains controversial since it has not been to the relevant statute<sup>78</sup>. But even agencies did not enjoy the authority that President Trump grants to DOGE. Its questionability has gone so far that some judges have already ruled that he “in many cases, he has exceeded the lawful authority of even a principal officer, or of the President himself.”<sup>79</sup> She too has mentioned that if Musk wanted to legally exercise all those rights and actions he currently exercises, he had to be an officer appointed by the Senate. Cynically speaking,

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<sup>75</sup> 104 STAT 2838, sec. 206(b)

<sup>76</sup> Romm, Tony (Feb. 06, 2025). Senate confirms Russell Vought to lead White House budget office. The Washington Post: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2025/02/06/russell-vought-confirmed-omb-director/>

<sup>77</sup> Devine, Donald; Dean Kirk, Dennis; Dans, Paul (auts.) Central Personnel Agencies: Managing the Bureaucracy. In: Roberts, Kevin; Dans, Paul; Groves, Steven (Eds.) (2023). Mandate for Leadership. The Conservative Promise. Washington DC: The Heritage Foundation. 72–75; 78–80; 82–83.

<sup>78</sup> 31 U.S.C. 901(b).

<sup>79</sup> STATE OF NEW MEXICO v. MUSK, 1:25-cv-00429, (D.D.C.). Page 16.

there would be nothing stopping Trump from going that way<sup>80</sup>, given that Congress is currently dominated by the GOP and has passed on even the most fringe appointees by the President, amongst them Tulsi Gabbard and Kash Patel. As time rolls by, we hear more about internal critique against the DOGE's performance on behalf of Republicans<sup>81</sup>, but this comes only weeks after its inauguration and several actions taken against the federal staff far beyond removing "DEI hires" and allegedly superfluous staffing. At least from the House Judiciary Committee, one would have had expected express opposition

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<sup>80</sup> And if it hasn't already been made as crystal clear as a mountain spring, the President has got no other option if he wants to shield his protégé from future legal conflicts with the courts. This has been written out in detail in a report already:

Rybicki, Elizabeth (Feb. 21, 2023). Senate Consideration of Presidential Nominations: Committee and Floor Procedure (RL 31980).

<https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/RL/RL31980/28> (PDF, 1.26 MB)

<sup>81</sup> Mascaro, Lisa; Freking, Kevin (Feb. 12, 2025). As DOGE hammers away at the US government, Republicans stir with quiet objections. AP News: <https://apnews.com/article/trump-musk-doge-republicans-mike-johnson-26ba7e32fb2bc1c054bf20d911aa5a8f>

Many of the House Republicans who came home to check up with their constituents learnt that they too do not necessarily enjoy watching some of their peers' livelihoods dishevelled by an unauthorised tech entrepreneur with no experience in governance, but this does not concern us until this opposition is carried into the House to pass bipartisan memoranda and legal initiatives to dissolve this agency. Until this happens, we should also mention that other House Republicans have also spoken out against President Trump's excessive use of Executive Orders as an alternative to actually acting like a US President. Read:

Hendrickson, Samantha (Feb. 20, 2025). Ohio GOP Rep. Balderson says Trump's executive orders 'getting out of control'. The Columbus Dispatch: <https://eu.dispatch.com/story/news/politics/2025/02/20/trump-executive-orders-troy-balderson-ohio-congress-gop-republican/79329526007/>

But don't expect too much, as they already remained mum during his first presidency, when he too exploited his power to issue EOs to an extent that one could rationally accuse him of undermining Congressional authority:

Rahman, Rema; Bennett, John T. (Feb. 06, 2017). GOP Doesn't Cry Foul on Trump's Executive Orders. Roll Call: <https://rollcall.com/2017/02/06/gop-doesnt-cry-foul-on-trumps-executive-orders/>

to this likely unlawful razzmatazz. Regrettably, in today's GOP, fealty to the Supreme Leader trumps one's pledge to serve the American people the Constitution.

It is true that the law does not define what an agency can access and what it can't, respectively what other departments are obliged to provide and what they aren't, but that's what the courts' rulings are necessary for meanwhile, as Congress remains mum on both sides of the aisle, except for some scattered comments condemning its overreach. But assuming that we are dealing with an agency, Congress would be well within its rights to subpoena staff as well as the head—whether we are talking about Elon Musk or Amy Gleason, the currently acting administrator of the DOGE<sup>82</sup>—to learn about its work as it falls behind its personal promise to be absolutely transparent—its website is nothing but a live feed of the agency's X feed; no reports or audits are shared thereupon, so that all that one learns is either through the feed or from the news. The reasoning behind the decisions felled are woven within said statements, another more than questionable approach to one's self-entitled authority, disregarding the fact that it is legally required to file reports to inform the public about its work<sup>83</sup>. (For which the taxpayers pay) Above all, a simple truth lies: For all that Musk is currently doing, or enables for his DOGE staff, he had to establish a department, and for that to happen, President Trump, like George W. Bush long before him, had to appoint him as an officer who had to undergo a Senate confirmation process in his turn. Nota bene: Although not legally required, Bush's plans for the post-9/11 Department of Homeland Security also underwent a discussion in the Senate on the authorities and limitations<sup>84</sup>. This way, we are now familiar with its legality and authority, unlike with DOGE,

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<sup>82</sup> Foley, Ryan J.; Slodysko, Brian (March 08, 2025). Meet Amy Gleason, the DOGE administrator who may – or may not – be wielding extraordinary power AP News: <https://apnews.com/article/doge-amy-gleason-musk-trump-caresync-62a0c13b8ecf153d449f09537d45e630> - the only correction I would suggest for the title is to replace “extraordinary” with “extralegal”. If there was one recurrent theme we could observe in news coverage of the DOGE, it is its repeated legal troubles.

<sup>83</sup> 124 STAT 2861, sec. 4(a)(2)(B)(ii)

<sup>84</sup> President Bush's Proposal to create a Department of Homeland Security. Hearing before the Committee on Governmental Affairs. 107<sup>th</sup> Cong (2002).

which to this day acts mostly within a cloud of opaqueness only dispersed by occasional rulings by federal court, now being vilified by politicians of the GOP for just that<sup>64</sup>. Likewise, we must not believe that the mere limitation or delineation of the DOGE's authority sufficed—we must insure that even assuming that it were here to stay, which it currently wouldn't be as the applicable EO set its expiry date for January 2026, thus exceeding Musk's status as a special governmental employee whose temporary employment ranged only for 100 days, it could work for the people and not against them; under a tolerable framework that would not require the courts' continuous review of its each and every action, let alone a Congress that did not render itself spellbound before its onslaught against the federal body government. To put it plain: Future arbitrary establishments of such agencies by renegade Presidents must be countered with a legal framework that either forbade it or placed it within strict and sanctioned banisters that could not easily be disjointed or manipulated to one's liking. The current Congress, dominated by Republicans at least until the Midterms in 2027, would implicitly obstruct such a process to save its sinecure, thus also proving Carl Schmitt right when he said that

*„Eine voraussetzungslose Gleichsetzung des Rechts mit dem Ergebnis irgendeines formalen Verfahrens wäre nur voraussetzungslose, also blinde Unterwerfung unter die reine, das heißt von jeder inhaltlichen Beziehung zu Recht und Gerechtigkeit losgelöste Deziſion der mit der Gesetzgebung betrauten Stellen, voraussetzungsloser Verzicht auf jeden Widerstand.“<sup>85</sup>*

Although we have already proven that it were not the lack of conditions presented before the legislative process were initiated, which also wouldn't happen until either a genuinely Conservative Republican—and, to use the jargon of the Trumpist GOP, not a conservative in name only (lower-case C on purpose)—or a keen Democratic President took over the reins and put this in a high place on his, her or their agenda. My suggestion to a legal framework would certainly be that when someone claimed the authority to subpoena sensitive data located in departments outside the agency's authority—which would be any data at all—would require a prior Congressional confirmation hearing as this would

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<sup>85</sup> Schmitt, Carl (2005 [1932]). *Legalität und Legitimität*. Berlin: Duncker & Humblot. Seite 23.

be an official power. A President's d'accord cannot be sufficient as the President cannot single-handedly rein over departments outside of the office's purview. After all, the DOGE as an agency reports to the President because it is associated with it, which means that it cannot deal with departments of the federal government, as its purview overlooks the same as the President's.

The President, one must admit, does of course enjoy the authority to "reorganise" the government, i.e. he enjoys the authority to create new departments (as per 22 U.S.C. §6611). After all, we wouldn't have the Department of Education or the aforementioned Department of Homeland Security if it weren't for the President's authority to bring them to life, even though during the Senate discussion with Bush's proposed reorganisation effort, there were concerns that if not handled properly, a legal wasteland could be left behind<sup>86</sup>. So to say, they were implicitly aware of what was at stakes when they discussed the proposal to create a department that would range widely into US-Americans' right to personal space and a government that knew its boundaries and where to draw the line where, to paraphrase Benjamin Franklin's famous maxim, those who gave up freedom for security didn't deserve either. Presidential reorganization has got a long history, harkening back to at least the beginning of the last century with the likes of Woodrow Wilson, although some of the greatest interest in historicism, besides my own which is all focused on this century alone firstly because it is the one I have been living in for most of the time, and secondly because it includes the most latest standing legislation concerning the subjects matter. For brevity's and relevance's sake, we will focus on Franklin D. Roosevelt's approach to reorganising the Presidential office in order to pass the New Deal, and George W. Bush, who we have alluded to already with the creation of the DHS. While the choice may seem arbitrary, also because it excludes the politically more scandalous presidency of Richard Nixon, it will get the job done at sketching the presidential reorganisation authority and the problems it comports.

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<sup>86</sup> *President Bush's Proposal &c.*, page 6. "We should not kid ourselves or the public about the complexities involved in developing this major reorganization. We know you have to crack some eggs to make an omelette. We have to make sure that when we crack the eggs, we don't end up with scrambled eggs."



Like President Trump nowadays, Delano Roosevelt undermined Congressional authority, technically even that of the regular officials he appointed and had confirmed by Congress, by flocking a tremendous workforce comparable to that around Elon Musk in the second Trump administration. The reason for this controversial move—today, one would think lighter of such moves, unless like the DOGE, they supersede the authority of an advisory entity the “Department” was presented as—was Delano Roosevelt’s perception of Congress as corrupt and overreaching in such a way that it, instead of himself, were prone to intercepting his authority<sup>87</sup>. With a Republican President in

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<sup>87</sup> Karl, B. D. (1977). Executive Reorganization and Presidential Power. *The Supreme Court Review*, 1977, 1-37. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1086/sr.1977.3109506>. Page 12.

Fair enough, like all his successors who demanded the authority to reorganise the Executive Branch, i.e. his. He was right about numerous things he addressed in his speech, for example when he said that “a self-government cannot long survive unless that government is an effective and efficient agency to serve mankind and carry out the will of the Nation”, but he still did not realise that it would have been better if he had left the power of reorganisation to Congress if most of what he was going to do was to lift himself from his duty to report to Congress what he did, by means of hiring evermore employees who bore no such duty, i.e. his advisers. Delano Roosevelt ranks amongst the Presidents with the most employed advisers at the White House. As he said, he employed a “Committee on Administrative Management”, ignoring the fact that Congress has got the power to enact committees to conduct such operations. There is the aforementioned OPM and the GAO, both of which oversee the government’s work to look for overspending and administrative malfunction. Keeping such decision-making and investigations within the White House gives the public the idea that the White House conspires against the checks and balances, the same thing that, now more obviously, is alleged against the second Trump administration. The five suggestions Delano Roosevelt presents as the conclusions of his own “Committee” could be understood as the precedence Trump relied upon when he forged his own pathway to absolute power. (For a transcript of the FDR speech, check the following link: Franklin D. Roosevelt (Jan. 12, 1937), “Message to Congress Recommending Reorganization of the Executive Branch.”, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/message-congress-recommending-reorganization-the-executive-branch>)

Some readers may allege me of being too harsh to an ultimately good President, and perhaps I am, but I also didn’t mean to draw upon his entire legacy, only upon the aspect of reorganisation and the approach he chose therefore. His “New Deal” is another question that has got no place here, but I presume that I wouldn’t find too many positive words for it. However, we must never remain too positive about figures in leadership anyway as there can be no unanimously good leader, no matter how hard one tried. No-one can be perfect because

charge today, one would rightly understand this to be an implicit threat against the checks and balances, because that's what it is: A sitting President cannot simply ignore officials he himself brought in to instead rely on a flock of unconfirmed officials to advise him on the questions surrounding his everyday work. One could describe his execution of the country's highest office as shady, given that so much has happened outside of the official mechanism, even after work at his private home, so that no protocol was either followed or written for later publication either within the National Archives or in the Congressional Record. Altogether, none of the elected Congressmembers except for those who were inducted into those presidential conspiracies could know what the President spoke about with those men, what his plans were, no-one except for the happy few could plan ahead and react to the President's actions<sup>88</sup>. My

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perfection is impossible to reach. MLK Jr. wasn't a downright good person either, he held diminishing views of women, even having raped some after they refused to have sex with him (Garrow, David J. (May 30, 2019 (last web crawl that worked)). The troubling legacy of Martin Luther King. Standpoint. (via Web Archive): <https://web.archive.org/web/20191019114027/https://standpointmag.co.uk/issues/june-2019/the-troubling-legacy-of-martin-luther-king/>); Albert Schweitzer perceived Africans as incapable of living independently, he thought that they needed white men to live in a civilisation—thus combining Hobbes' Leviathan with racism; even Mother Teresa was later alleged of having cultivated a 'cult of suffering' that maintained bad hygiene in order to stick herself out as a caring saint of Jesus-like goodness (Chatterjee, Aroup (2003). *Mother Teresa. The Final Verdict*. Calcutta: Meteor Books. Page 203). All too often, adoration and idolisation spring from a lack of information, or a PR campaign that trumped in-depth investigations into the shadier activities and personally held views of the self-entitled saints. I too must confess that I hold high views of Dwight D. "Ike" Eisenhower, but I am nonetheless able to tell that the CIA missions conducted in Eastern Europe during the Iron Curtain, Castro Cuba and Tibet as the CPC conducted invasions into the Himalayan kingdom lacked the fervour to do what was needed to succeed. He himself described his presidency as a "profile in timidity and indecision" (Prados, John (2006). *Safe for Democracy. The Secret Wars of the CIA*. Lanham (MD): Rowman & Littlefield. Page 264). I must unfortunately agree, because most of the failure that the CIA produced was due to either the insufficient oomph or unfortunately timed leaks to the public that would also later doom the Nixon presidency's withdrawal from Việt Nam. But that is for another text. For now, we should jot down that all uncritical support must be questioned, no matter the adversaries and the contemporary context.

<sup>88</sup> Hess, Stephen; Pfiffner, James P. (2021). *Organizing the Presidency*, 4<sup>th</sup> Ed. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press. Pp. 13–21.

description of what he did may sound as if there were only about a dozen of men who were familiar with the President's plans, thinking and work, which is not true, although the actual picture doesn't look any merrier: As I have written above, he has gathered some executive staffers who worked for him, thereby undermined the cabinet's authority for such proximity to the President. Of course, all those internal staff were allocated to highly specialised agencies<sup>89</sup>, which bears both more questions concerning the President's conduct's Constitutionality, and why no repercussions were drawn in consequence of his performance as soon as he departed the White House. As soon as he left the White House, they were smart enough to introduce a Presidential term limit in order to not see reëlections only limited by the finiteness of human life on earth. Combined with other measurements Delano Roosevelt has taken<sup>90</sup>, we could speak of a predecessor to Trump who has paved the way for his power grasp also because throughout the past decades, almost entire centuries, no actions were taken to stop the repetition of this misbehaviour, proving Karl Marx' reconstructed idiom by G. W. F. Hegel, who once claimed that every incident in history happened twice—once as a tragedy, and as a farce the second time<sup>91</sup>. Trump's second tenure would thus be the farcical repetition of the tragic presidency of Delano Roosevelt, or at least one of its many; we may just not have noticed it because he is most often remembered in good graces by a majority of the population which relies mostly on its civics knowledge from school. We could argue that such false images are the spawn of a malfunctioning because ill-construed educational system that, according to Libertarian economist Murray Rothbard, focused on a "collectivist" basis rather than an "individualist" to provide broadbrush education rather than tailormade for everyone<sup>92</sup>, but that

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<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, page 22.

<sup>90</sup> Barry D. Karl (1977), page 31.

<sup>91</sup> Marx, Karl Der 18. Brumaire des Louis Bonaparte. In: Günter Heyden et al. (Eds.) (1985). Karl Marx Friedrich Engels Gesamtausgabe (MEGA), I/11. Werke - Artikel - Entwürfe. Juli 1851 bis Dezember 1852. Berlin: Verlag Karl Dietz. Seite 96.

<sup>92</sup> Rothbard, Murray N. (1999 [1979]). Education. Free and Compulsory. Auburn (AL). Ludwig von Mises Institute. Pp. 16–18; 48 ff.

I do not want to start a discussion on where his critique of the public compulsory school system has got and lacks merit, and instead want to emphasise that he, for some reason, left

out the third option besides private schools: Homeschooling. One would think that it would be a staple amongst Libertarians, when private schools are not available in their district. Kevin Ryan, who wrote the foreword to the essay, mentioned it once, but it doesn't receive any closer consideration. I am not against it as studies have shown, to my surprise, that those who were homeschooled are able to match their counterparts who attended public or private schools:

Richard G. Medlin (2013) Homeschooling and the Question of Socialization Revisited, *Peabody Journal of Education*, 88:3, 284-297, DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.1080/0161956X.2013.796825>

Murphy, J. (2014). The Social and Educational Outcomes of Homeschooling. *Sociological Spectrum*, 34(3), 244-272. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02732173.2014.895640>

It was also my belief that only those who earned high wages could afford to homeschool their offspring, but as it turns out, there is a greater probability that those who homeschool their children have got ideological beliefs that drove them to this decision, and had at least one party amongst the parents of whom at least one stays at home anyway, and therefore grasps the initiative to localise education at home too. (Lois, J. (2021). Homeschooling motherhood. *The Wiley handbook of home education*, pp. 189-190.)

The finding that many of those who choose homeschooling over sending their children either a public or private school for ideological reasons, such as being pious Christians who perceive the public school system as indoctrinating the pupils with false idols or allegedly untrue or age-inappropriate information such as the evolutionary theory or sexual education. In the end, it is their choice, and little opportunity to force those children out of their parents' fangs. There is a good chance that many of them will end up like the children of the New York City Orthodox Jewish community who can barely calculate with basic mathematical means such as addition and subtraction:

Shapiro, Eliza; Rosenthal, Brian M; Markowitz, Jonah (Sept. 11, 2022). In Hasidic Enclaves, Failing Private Schools Flush With Public Money. New York Times: <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/11/nyregion/hasidic-yeshivas-schools-new-york.html>

Aside of the public funding those failing schools receive, the separation of public and private compulsory schools, besides the renegade alternative of private homeschooling by parents, remains a dilemma unless one decides that both private schooling and homeschooling were forbidden on the grounds that every child deserved an equal start in life and that the state could only guarantee that when everyone attended state schools. Private schools have to provide education equal to states', but as we see, the observatory bodies too fail to report deficiencies sometimes. But when they are properly overseen by watchdogs and responsible departments, they can perform to such a degree that their pupils overtake their counterparts at the public schools:

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Henderson, M., Anders, J., Green, F., & Henseke, G. (2019). Private schooling, subject choice, upper secondary attainment and progression to university. *Oxford Review of Education*, 46(3), 295-312. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03054985.2019.1669551>

To draw the line back to this text's actual topic—Donald J. Trump, Elon Musk and the DOGE—we should also note that the latter and the second are also involved in the incremental dissolution of the Department of Education, which in turn means that when schools should eventually be unable to provide proper education, affected parents had only two options remaining: To homeschool their children, which required the ability to teach the subjects relevant to their children as soon as they had to succeed in exams to obtain necessary certificates; and to send them to private schools that were still sufficiently staffed, they had to have the money to pay the tuitions. It is another aspect that Rothbard may have forgotten or ignored: That public (compulsory) education is an option for parents where either no-one is able to formally educate their children, or where both have to work in order to make ends meet. His text on education is therefore a luxury critique from up in the ivory tower. Meanwhile, some alternative educational models like the Montessori model have already transformed from a system for the public into one for the endowed few:

Winter, Jessica (March 03, 2022). The Miseducation of Maria Montessori. The New Yorker: <https://www.newyorker.com/books/under-review/the-miseducation-of-maria-montessori>

To add a topical addendum to this footnote, it is with some dismay on the 21<sup>st</sup> of March 2025 that I have to announce that President Trump, after overseeing the gradual dissolution of the Department of Education, he has signed an Executive Order entitled “Improving Education Outcomes by Empowering Parents, States, and Communities” (<https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/03/improving-education-outcomes-by-empowering-parents-states-and-communities/>) into law, although the title misleads: To no-one's surprise, it proclaims the complete dissolution of the aforementioned department without substitution. The plan behind it is that now, parents had greater power in determining their children's education, blissfully ignoring that parents hitherto were free to homeschool their children. Unlike in Europe, the model is common far and wide. States will have fewer funds from the central government to finance their public schools, so that they will likely deteriorate to a degree where those parents who can afford to the slightest send their children to private schools to take care of their future. President Trump mentioned the degrading scores of US pupils in nationwide examinations of their basic soft skills, although we do not know how he draws the line to improving skills once compulsory education is cleft into individual responsibilities. In the end, it is the most authoritarian and centralised nations—Singapore and mainland China, for example—who rank the highest in global comparisons. (OECD (Dec. 05, 2023), PISA 2022 Results (Volume 11). Learning During - and From - Disruption. Link: <https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/pisa-2022-results-volume->

would be a far fetch and had to be proven first. And after all, even the best education does not protect someone from falling for extremely stupid ideas either. One just needs to think of the microbiologists who believed that SARS-CoV-2 was made up, or the pilots who think that the earth were flat<sup>93</sup>. Sometimes, the closest answer to questions on why some people hold more positive views of a President can also be that there was too little time in school to cover a presidency, particularly one that was longer than the maximum eight years as we know them today, to a degree that made it possible to highlight all aspects, the good, the bad and the ugly ones. And the New Deal finally fell into a time of reconstruction in the country after a devastating second World War. This, too, was part of the argument he brought up: That he wanted to hire staffers who could address highly specific issues in order to ultimately micro-manage the *Volkswirtschaft* (national economy). Bush, on the other hand, experienced the 9/11 Islamist terrorist attack on the Twin Towers in New York City, which led him to declare war on Iraq in retaliation. On the interior affairs side of things, he pushed the PATRIOT Act through to ease surveillance of Americans to root out probable terrorist actions before they could happen<sup>94</sup>, and initiated the creation of the DHS as a merger of several departments overseeing border patrols, criminal investigations and law enforcement beyond the CBP, the FBI and local police departments. In what would today be described as a Trump-like grasp on full and absolute powers, the Act was pushed

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[iv\\_5a849c2a-en.html](#)) Then again, one would follow a red herring when one took President Trump by his words and did not look behind the curtain to see that he is grasping for straws to apologise for his ultimately disruptive policies. The protests at the recent town halls<sup>147</sup> have proven to show that his policies are far from unanimously supported by the party's base.

<sup>93</sup> Benini, Sandro (Feb. 12, 2021). Warum auch gescheite Leute unglaublichen Blödsinn reden können. Tages-Anzeiger: <https://www.tagesanzeiger.ch/virologen-sind-faschos-und-den-klimawandel-gibt-es-nicht-179446671015>

Although I must disclaim that this article is about academics who work in apparent jobs but hold controversial up to downright wrong views on topics that do not concern their professional fields.

<sup>94</sup> Ombres, D. (2015). NSA domestic surveillance from the Patriot Act to the Freedom Act: the underlying history, constitutional basis, and the efforts at reform. *Seton Hall Legis. J.*, 39, 27. Perm. Link: <https://heinonline.org/HOL/LandingPage?handle=hein.journals/sethlegj39> . Pp. 32–34.

through without prior hearings<sup>95</sup>, something that would normally lead to impeachment processes as it abruptly undermines the authority of Congress to legislate and check upon the President; lest the A&T brazenly infringed US-Americans' basic civil rights, including the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment's right to privacy<sup>96</sup> and the sanctity of discretion between the government and the individual. The only reason that this bill has since not been challenged by either Congressional Committees or single Congressmembers is that the A&T was not proposed by the POTUS himself but by Congress: The President just skipped the hearings in the Senate to have it affirmed by either a roll call or an anonymous vote<sup>97</sup>. To sum it up: The House presented the draft law we now know as the PATRIOT A&T, and the President signed it into law before it was being discussed in the Senate. Challenges concerning the A&T's legality were nonetheless raised on other issues, referring closer to its details<sup>98</sup>.

But we do not want to discuss legal implications of national-security legislation, we are more concerned about the implementation of the Department of Homeland Security at least shortly. Earlier<sup>84</sup> we already cited the apparent hearing, where we learnt that certain legislators were concerned about acting overzealously throwing the baby out with the bathwater by granting the President windfall permissions about the reorganisation of the Executive Branch, although the question of surplus employees was concerned too. It is noticeable throughout hearings concerning reorganisation that federal employees could lose their rights<sup>99</sup>, e.g., protection from firing without merit as

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<sup>95</sup> Houghton, Suzette A.; Romaniuk, Scott N. Civil Liberties and Homeland Security. In: Romaniuk, Scott N.; Catino, Martin Scott; Martin, C. Augustus (Eds.) (2023). *The Handbook of Homeland Security*. Boca Raton (FL): CRC Press. Page 527.

<sup>96</sup> Hardin, D. (2003). The fuss over two small words: The unconstitutionality of the USA PATRIOT A&T amendments to FISA under the Fourth Amendment. *Geo. Wash. L. Rev.*, 71, 291. Perm Link: <https://heinonline.org/HOL/LandingPage?handle=hein.journals/gwlr71>

<sup>97</sup> Barnes, Nicholas J. Law Enforcement and Legal Foundations of Homeland Security. In: *The Handbook of Homeland Security*, page 582.

<sup>98</sup> Smith, Cary Stacy; Hung, Li-Ching (2010). *The Patriot A&T: Issues and Controversies*. Springfield (IL): Charles C Thomas Publisher, Ltd. Pp. 172-3.

<sup>99</sup> 108-33: Toward a logical governing structure: Restoring executive reorganization authority: Hearing before the Committee on Government Reform, House of Representatives. 108<sup>th</sup>

outlined earlier—that is, that the respective department or the OPM must list a viable reason for terminating an employee’s contract, according to 5 U.S. C. § 2302(b)(1); 5 CFR § 731.202; 5 U.S.C., sect. 4303; and 38 U.S.C. §714. Already nowadays we observe how the Trump administration attempts to limit federal employees’ rights, in particular on the subject of bargaining and unionisations. It is ironically the DHS as one of the first employees that has announced a cessation of employees’ TSA collective bargaining agreements<sup>100</sup>. This was preceded by almost daily news about mass layoffs in miscellaneous federal departments that in turn were withdrawn by federal courts who opined that neither the Executive Branch, nor DOGE enjoyed the authority to fell such decisions. We have spoken about that beforehand. In my opinion, the two of them—the consolidation of departments and/or agencies, and the reformation of federal employees’ rights—do not need to appear at the same time, they can be discussed separately. There is no denying that some of them will be laid off when a consolidation happens, but that is natural and cannot be avoided when a consolidation happens. Not everyone will still be needed when the work is being gathered in a single department or agency. As Mr. Walker of X has said during the hearing in the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress:

*“When you have situations here you are identifying certain functions or certain activities that you’re not proposing to eliminate, you’re proposing to transfer them and to put them*

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Cong. Page 57 (Testimony Rep. Tom Davis (R–VA–04)); Page 80 (Testimony Rep. Chris Shays (R–CT–04)).

107–560: President Bush’s Proposal to Create a Department of Homeland Security. Hearing Before the Committee on Governmental Affairs. 107<sup>th</sup> Cong. Page 21. (Testimony Sen. Daniel Akaka (D–HI))

Off-topic fun fact: Sen. Daniel Akaka of Honolulu has made an unexpected, figurative comeback to the Senate during a roll call years ago, where an elder Congressman unintentionally retrieved him to a roll call, perhaps also because for the time of his tenure of 13 years, he usually appeared atop of the list, given his surname. Read:

Lesniewski, Niels (June 25, 2020). ‘Mr. Akaka . . .’ returns — again. Roll Call: <https://rollcall.com/2020/06/25/mr-akaka-returns-again/>

<sup>100</sup> Satana, Rebecca; Sisak, Michael R. (March 08, 2025). Homeland Security ends TSA collective bargaining agreement, in effort to dismantle union protections. AP News: <https://apnews.com/article/collective-bargaining-agreement-tsa-homeland-security-e3eb1d5e0ae8eb4a6fdb87cd7f6bd39>



*in an area where they are more mainstream with regard to mission and where you can integrate activities rather than coordinate activities, I think those are examples of things that, if you had fast track authority, it is much more likely that these proposals would come forward and that some of them would ultimately be enacted into law.”<sup>101</sup>*

A little while later, Mr. Walker has furthermore stated that a reorganisation does not necessarily lead to a loss of jobs<sup>102</sup>. But for a legislator and regulator, the question should not be how a consolidation of departments and/or agencies could negatively affect next quarter’s BLS release on the nation’s employment rate. The government is not a means to employ those who cannot find a job on the free market, their issue lies elsewhere, in an area where governments fared better in offering free or cheap job trainings. When one works for the government, one does so in order to keep the system running, they are thus the figurative gearwheel inside the sociopolitical clockwork. Contrary trends can be observed in countries like Spain or Italy, where respectively one federal official was found out to haven’t worked for decades without anyone noticing or reporting this<sup>103</sup>. The Austrian right-winged Liberal philosopher Ludwig von Mises has stated that there is no pressure for federal officials when they lose their jobs because they could usually return to the free market, but he does not make the same argument for those who lose their jobs on the free market, he doesn’t believe that they could fall back into the public administration<sup>104</sup>, because he believes that bureaucrats, including the small gearwheels who work mere 9-to-5 jobs, were a special kind of people. He nonetheless admitted that a bureaucracy more or less had a *raison d’être* because it administered work that could not be

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<sup>101</sup> 108-33: *Towards a logical governing structure* &c., page 73. (Testimony by Comptroller General David M. Walker (D–WV))

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, page 80.

<sup>103</sup> Puccio, Simone (Apr. 20, 2021). Per 15 anni ha preso lo stipendio senza aver lavorato neppure un giorno. Agenzia Giornalistica Italiana: <https://www.agi.it/cronaca/news/2021-04-20/stipendio-senza-lavorare-12246843/>

El Periódico (via EFE Noticias) (04 Ago. 2017). Despedido el funcionario que no fue a trabajar en 10 años. Conexión: <https://www.elperiodico.com/es/politica/20170804/despiden-funcionario-sin-trabajar-diez-anos-6207517>

<sup>104</sup> von Mises, Ludwig (aut.); Hülsmann, Carsten & Jörg-Guido (trans.) (2013 [1944]). *Die Bürokratie*. Sankt Augustin: Academia. Seite 66.

measured monetarily. This is true, and makes evaluating its required workforce even harder, although I would disagree with him on the idea that bureaucrats were a special kind of people, as this would mean to classify someone by only their profession. Those who work in non-general professions differ in terms of their knowledge about a specialised field: An engineer is adept in applying mathematics in the construction and conceptualisation machinery; nurses are particularly empathetic and versed in administering flocks of squirrelly toddlers; translators and interpreters are capable of converting texts in all shapes and form into other languages in such a way that readers and/or listeners will perceive it as natural, as if it were composed originally in their tongue. It can influence their characteristics as humans but doesn't need to. There are no pacific traits that shape the common bureaucrat, although some badmouths would argue that they carried a signature dilatoriness. I cannot tell whether that were the general case, it likely depends on the individual office in a particular town or city. What is likelier is that one will not be able to move into a job on either side because they lack the experience in certain fields or tasks. For example, in Germany, when you want to enter into a bureaucratic job, you must have studies and graduated from public administration, and, depending on the seniority of the job one is interested in entering, a couple of years of experience in this job or a comparable one. Such experience could not be obtained on the free market, because while companies and corporations can become incrementally more bureaucratic, it does not liken the public government. On the free market, it is more negatively denoted, demarking slow, cluttered procedures with pointless extra steps that add no value to the overall process. In the hearing of the 108<sup>th</sup> Senate, this argument has been brought up a couple of times<sup>105</sup>, and they were right to emphasising the argument in favour of the president's authority to reorganise the government. During the hearing on the creation of the DHS, Senator Fred Thompson (R-TN) remarked that "while some bureaucracies will be reduced or eliminated, we are creating a large new bureaucracy with new leadership, a new culture, and a new mission."<sup>106</sup> At first glance, one would perceive him as

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<sup>105</sup> 108-33: *Towards a logical governing structure* &c., page 17 (Testimony Rep. Tom Delay (R-TX-22); pp. 82-83 (Testimony by Pres. emerit. Dwight Ink, Institute of Public Administration)

<sup>106</sup> 107-560: *President Bush's Proposal* &c., page 4. (Testimony Sen. Fred Thompson (R-TN)).

earnest, but when we think about what the plan for this act was for originally—to create “a comprehensive National Incident Management System that would consolidate existing Federal Government emergency response plans into one generally all-hazard plan”<sup>107</sup>—, we would think that the point of the consolidation was to trim the apparatus down so that it worked more efficiently. That is the sole thing where one can agree with the DOGE in good faith: A bloated bureaucracy cannot walk quickly enough to fulfil its job to the best. Hence, just merging a multitude of departments is not enough. Some of the workforce will have to move on elsewhere. But this is not the DOGE’s to do because it is not authorised by Congress to do so, it has neither the expertise<sup>108</sup> for this job, nor the credentials<sup>79</sup>. And while we’re speaking about DOGE again, as it has to be, we should also mention that while the agency was quick to harass other federal employees by binding their hands figuratively and de facto disallowing them from spending any money for their work<sup>109</sup>, neither the agency’s head, nor Elon Musk, has cut their monthly salaries, many of which are six-digit figures<sup>110</sup>. There is nothing wrong about someone making so much money when it is on par with their work and responsibility, but it is hypocritical when those salaries are paid out to the department that is meant to cut costs so that the American taxpayers do not pay more for services than they needed to. Yet this would presume faithfulness to the cause as outlined in the oft-quoted Executive Order that we understand as the foundational paper of the “Department”: “to implement the President’s DOGE Agenda, by modernizing Federal technology and software to maximize governmental efficiency and

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<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, page 28. (Testimony Governor Thomas Joseph “Tom” Ridge (R) of Pennsylvania) For transparency’s sake: He would later become the first Assistant Secretary of the DHS.

<sup>108</sup> Elliott, Vittoria (Feb. 02, 2025). The Young, Inexperienced Engineers Aiding Elon Musk’s Government Takeover. WIRED: <https://www.wired.com/story/elon-musk-government-young-engineers/>

<sup>109</sup> Schiffer, Zoë (Feb. 20, 2025). DOGE Puts \$1 Spending Limit on Government Employee Credit Cards. WIRED: <https://www.wired.com/story/doge-government-credit-cards/>

<sup>110</sup> Knibbs, Kate (March 04, 2025). Some DOGE Staffers Are Drawing Six-Figure Government Salaries. WIRED: <https://www.wired.com/story/doge-government-salaries-elon-musk/>

productivity”<sup>111</sup>. Given the prominence of the topic of a slim bureaucratic body that could operate with agility—to return to the Senate hearing on the creation of the DHS, we could also mention that the purpose of the department merger was to “streamline federal incident management procedures, eliminating the artificial distinction between ‘crisis management’ and ‘consequence management’.”<sup>112</sup>—we should ask ourselves: Isn’t there already an agency or even a department that is dedicated to this very purpose? We have spoken about this beforehand, also mentioning the “Office of Management and Budget” (OMB), currently headed by the “Project 2025” mastermind Russell Vought<sup>76</sup>; what we didn’t seem to have addressed yet, but which was addressed in the hearing on the restructuring of government in general<sup>113</sup>, is that the President enjoyed that authority, at least according to Mr. Roth of the AFL-CIO has mentioned 5 U.S.C. § 901 *et sequitur*, but I think that we do not need to cite the whole balderdash and can instead refer directly to 5 U.S.C. § 906(c) and (d). Those are the relevant ones; they read as follows:

*(c)It is the intent of Congress that the President should provide appropriate means for broad citizen advice and participation in restructuring and reorganizing the executive branch.*

*(d)The President shall from time to time examine the organization of all agencies and shall determine what changes in such organization are necessary to carry out any policy set forth in subsection (a) of this section.* (All types of underscores mine)

To some degree, those two subsections are contradictory: The former lays out that the President enjoys this authority for the Executive Branch, which would be on par with the Constitution (Const. art. II, sec. 2) The latter,

<sup>111</sup> The White House (Jan. 20, 2025). Establishing and Implementing the President’s “Department of Government Efficiency”. Link: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/establishing-and-implementing-the-presidents-department-of-government-efficiency/> — as it turns out, I didn’t yet cite it, so here we go. Some may take offence in me not using the numerical address of the single EOs, but that is only because I do not go the extra mile to find the authoritative source for all of EOs with their respective numerical identifiers. In the end, I will always link the text to the White House’s website.

<sup>112</sup> 107-560: *President Bush’s Proposal* &c., page 135 (“The Department of Homeland Security”).

<sup>113</sup> 108-33: *Towards a logical governing structure* &c., pp. 107–8. (Testimony by Mark Roth, general counsel of the American Federation of Government Employees, AFL-CIO)

meanwhile, broadens that scape of authority to the whole body politic. At first I thought that it could be the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) in charge of firing federal employees, but that was eventually overturned by California (CA) Northern District Judge William H. Alsup, who ruled that the mass layoff of probationary workers were unlawful because it had no authority to do so<sup>114</sup>. The question, with regards to that ruling, should therefore be: If the OPM does not have this authority, why should the President? The problem may be something more laughable, weren't we confronted with a destructive President like Donald J. Trump: That while, as per 5 U.S.C. §1101, sec. 535(a), the OPM has got the authority to audit

(1) *How productivity within the Federal workforce can be increased, the delivery of Government services improved, and the payroll costs of Government controlled through*

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<sup>114</sup> American Federation Of Government Employees, AFL-CIO v. United States Office of Personnel Management, 3:25-cv-01780, (N.D. Cal.). Pp. 21; 23.

In the ruling it can be read that the Office did not have authority to fire other agencies' employees. He was nonetheless more explicit about his point in his opening statement to the release of this opinion: American Federation of Government Employees (March 03, 2025). Judge Sides with AFGE Saying Trump's Mass Firings of Probationary Employees Illegal. Link: <https://www.afge.org/article/judge-sides-with-afge-saying-trumps-mass-firings-of-probationary-employees-illegal/>

The ruling also contradicts what I could find out about the OPM's duties and qualifications. Before I found this ruling by Mr. Alsup, I stumbled over 5 USC §903, obviously derived from the aforementioned law that was referred by others justifying that the POTUS had rights to dismiss federal employees. But it only refers to agencies, which must lead us to conclude that the power is limited to the White House's associated agencies alone, not what we have been observing throughout the past 60-odd days throughout the government, where DOGE affiliates and the President himself have been laying off staff as if they actually ruled debt-stricken Argentina, and not the modestly prosperous United States.

As a current addition to this footnote, as of recently, judge William H. Alsup has given the subsequent order to the Trump administration to reinstate all recently fired probationary workers: Washington State Attorney General Nick Brown (March 13, 2025). Federal court orders reinstatement of fired probationary federal employees. Link: <https://www.atg.wa.gov/news/news-releases/federal-court-orders-reinstatement-fired-probationary-federal-employees> . If this case can be read as legal precedence to other cases in which the Trump administration or its affiliate DOGE has fired probationary federal employees, a lot of reinstatements could happen in the near future, if only they were challenged in court.

*improved organization, training, advanced technology, and modern management practices.*

- (2) *The size, structure, and composition of the Federal workforce.*
- (3) *Criteria for use by departments and agencies to determine the level of personnel necessary to accomplish their functions and goals.*
- (4) *Changes in Federal law, regulations, and administrative practices to promote economy, productivity, effectiveness, and managerial accountability within the Federal workforce.*

But this is it: They will audit the departments to evaluate their performance, but they have no power to sanction inefficient or even illicit behaviour. The same applies to the more or less better-known GAO, the Government Accountability Office, who presents its oversight function more pointedly in its name. It is known to publish monthly or weekly reports on where money can be saved, it is the government's very own tax accountant. Yet it meets an even worse fate as that it reports to Congress, the entity with the power to subpoena anyone it deems responsible for anything it investigates<sup>115</sup>, and since it also bears responsibility for the government's finances (Const., Art. 1, sect. 8, cl. 1), it would make sense to pick up the GAO's or the OPM's reports and discuss whether any consequences should be drawn from them. What does it do instead? Not read and pick them up for later discussions at the workplace. This has gone as far as to lead to critique amongst newspapers and right-winged pundits with whom one must unfortunately agree because they have got a point<sup>116</sup>. The first article cited couldn't know how far and how illegal the DOGE would act once it came into its impermissible power realm, whereas the second article tries to

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<sup>115</sup> The House Oversight Committee, more than a month ago, even voted to subpoena Elon Musk for the very purpose of learning more about the DOGE's work, although by now, it would be more helpful to instead subpoena Amy Gleason, given her leadership role in the agency. Committee on Oversight and Government Reform Democrats (Feb. 06, 2025). At Hearing, Oversight Democrats Vote to Subpoena Elon Musk to Testify on Reckless Actions and Abuse of Public Trust. Link: <https://oversightdemocrats.house.gov/news/press-releases/hearing-oversight-democrats-vote-subpoena-elon-musk-testify-reckless-actions>

<sup>116</sup> de Rugy, Veronique (Nov. 22, 2024). GAO Is the DOGE That Congress often Ignores. National Review: <https://www.nationalreview.com/corner/gao-is-the-doge-that-congress-often-ignores/>

Lips, Dan (Feb. 20, 2025). A Solution for Cutting Government Waste. City Journal: <https://www.city-journal.org/article/doge-elon-musk-government-spending-gao-cbo>

extrapolate the problem it so ham-handedly addresses, but both do indeed make a good point insofar as that the DOGE can be understood as a symptom of agencies who were hitherto ignored until an abler, more independent agency would pick up their authority and combine it with the power of a department with a head who had been confirmed by the Senate. (Which Musk never was) A preliminary conclusion could therefore be: The DOGE will be dissolved as it lacks any reason to exist and has since its inauguration on January 21, 2025, broken several laws, mostly related to overreach beyond its purview. Those staffers who can be deemed capable of exercising their job in a legal framework could transition to either the GAO, the OPM, or the CBO. Each of these three Offices need to enjoy greater authority insofar as that Congress must not be able to lackadaisically ignore its reports and other publications—they are the ones who cannot only read them, but also convert their findings into legislation! Without at least considering them, they are nothing more than NGO staff who make a living from reporting on governmental abuse of taxpayers' money. And for that purpose, they didn't need to be on the government's payroll, there are plenty of employers residing in the Beltway already.

I am familiar with only one anti-Federalist who has considered the question somehow, but since most of them were more concerned with the presidential power of appointments, “Federal Farmer”, as the *nom de plume* reads, has at least spent one passage in thought about what to do about public officials who become a little too comfortable in their offices. He has suggested a rotary occupation comparable to the concept of term limits, although with a twist: He wanted to make sure that offices remain ineligible due to his suspicion of said power of appointments; or as he said:

“[...] *the legislature is not a proper body for the appointment of officers in general. But having gone through with the different modes of appointment. I shall endeavour to shew what share in the distribution of the power of appointments the legislature must. from necessity. rather than from propriety.*”<sup>117</sup> (sic!)

What adds up to his suspicion, and where we can retrospectively correct him, is his belief that the Senate, by means of long-term occupying Senators, could

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<sup>117</sup> The Federal Farmer XIII (Jan. 14, 1788). In: Storing, Herbert J.; Dry, Murray (Eds.) *The Complete Anti-Federalist*, vol. II. Chicago; London: The University of Chicago Press. Page 304.

control the President. It was not to be the Senators who would cause the problem per se, but a Senate dominantly occupied by affiliates of the President's party who, after their party's conversion into a cult of personality, no longer checks upon the President. It would of course be naïve to believe that any party affiliate would throw a colleague under the bus because they viewed their duty as Congressmembers superior to their allegiance with a party. But throughout the hearings for Presidential appointees, we have observed an astounding unseriousness and lack of responsibility for the long-term effects of incompetent appointments. Kash Patel was, next to Tulsi Gabbard and Robert F. Kennedy Jr., the most obvious example, not only because of his incompetence, but also because of his opinion that the January 06 Capitol Hill Insurrectionists were no anti-Democratic insurrectionists, but heroes<sup>118</sup>. The Federal Farmer thus may have had a point when he suggested term limits in a follow-up essay, given that officials during their first and only term

*“will be governed by very different considerations: he can have no rational hopes or expectations of retaining his office after the expiration of a known limited time, or of continuing the office in his family, as by the constitution there must be a constant transfer of it from one man to another.”*<sup>119</sup>

In reality, this may be nothing more than a modicum of solace, given that one may not need more than four years to leave behind nothing but smithereens of a formerly honourable office, when there are no safeguards limiting an official, neither from the Congress, nor from watchdog agencies that the incumbent President had removed beforehand<sup>120</sup> in order to strip governmental agencies of their oversight function. As we can observe from today, the 09<sup>th</sup> February 2025,

<sup>118</sup> Suderman, Alan; Liderman, Juliet (July 09, 2024). Kash Patel is pushing conspiracies and his brand. He's poised to help lead a Trump administration. Associated Press: <https://www.ap.org/news-highlights/spotlights/2024/kash-patel-is-pushing-conspiracies-and-his-brand-hes-poised-to-help-lead-a-trump-administration/>

Owen, Tess (Jan. 30, 2025). Kash Patel's Political-Persecution Fantasies. The New Yorker: <https://www.newyorker.com/news/the-lede/kash-patels-political-persecution-fantasies>

<sup>119</sup> The Federal Farmer xiv (Jan. 17, 1788). In: Herber J. Storing & Murray Dry, *ibid.*, page 312.

<sup>120</sup> Richer, Alanna Durkin (March 06, 2025). Appeals court allows removal of watchdog agency head as legal battle rages over Trump firing. AP News: <https://apnews.com/article/special-counsel-watchdog-agency-trump-firing-5f75cd483a23959dd1fe5f5fb38095f4>



onwards, we must expect for conditions to become worse, and our focalisation of the Federalists in favour of the anti-Federalists to be erroneous, because the Federalists, in my opinion, have given the aspiring independent America and its pioneering, *Lockean* Constitution too much leeway, with the starkest negative consequences becoming incrementally visible. “A Farmer” would have agreed with many comparatively illiterate commentators when he said that it rich men would be indifferent about the emergence of tyranny within their rows because

*“they are the ministers of tyrants, and always engross the places of honour and profit, whilst the greater part of the common people are led by the nose, and played about by these very men, for the destruction of themselves and their class.”*<sup>121</sup>

I still stand by my word that the US are not going to become an Oligarchy, no matter how common that predicate has become as an etiquette for what Trump is carving out of an imperfect Democracy. An Oligarch would never ruin the economy by declaring an unsolicited tariff war that will make imports more expensive, thus coercing companies to retrieve production at the expense of higher costs just because sales at home otherwise became more expensive in the process. For producers of any fashion, the situation becomes a zero-sum game because they cannot win, they can only reduce the size of windfall losses, instigated by an economically illiterate President surrounded by yellow yes-sayers. It is like in Hans Christian Andersen’s famous telltale of “Kejserens nye klæder”, but without the small child who spoke truth to him, if only out of ignorance about the common *etiquette*. Or, there were no such figurative child to whom Trump would listen when it told him that “Du han har jo ikke noget på!” In addition, Trump never had the stature to, upon realisation, say: “Nu må jeg holde processionen ud.” Instead, he would undergo all stages of grief, starting with denial and vilification of all those who spoke truth to his denialism. He would skip the depression, or just grieve in private while maintaining his persona in public, and immediately move on to the bargaining phase, trying to make a profit from his public humiliation. Whatever his greater plans, or lack thereof, will be, they do not become apparent yet. The aspect of benefiting a select few

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<sup>121</sup> A Farmer and Planter (March 27, 1788). To The Farmers and Planters of Maryland. In: Storing, Herbert J.; Dry, Murray (Eds.) *The Complete Anti-Federalist*, vol. v. Chicago; London: The University of Chicago Press. Page 77.

businessmen within the inner circle of the President doesn't show, either. Bezos and Zuckerberg still remained where they were before the inauguration, except for their privileged placement during the ceremony. Musk became the contested adviser, while his major automotive company, Tesla Inc., suffered losses ever since the inauguration<sup>122</sup>. This contradicted the model we have been observing

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<sup>122</sup> Peterson, Becky; McLain, Sean (March 06, 2025). Tesla's Fortunes Fall as Musk Rises in Trump World. Wall Street Journal: <https://www.wsj.com/business/autos/tesla-elon-musk-consumer-backlash-19326a57>

*Fortunately*, Elon Musk and Tesla find themselves in good company, as only a couple of days ago from when I started writing this footnote, Bloomberg reported that Google Inc.'s Sergei Brin, Meta Inc.'s Mark Zuckerberg, Louis Vuitton's Bernard Arnault and Amazon's former CEO Jeff Bezos have met a similar fate, although their support, unlike Musk's, has been rather tacit. Read:

Sloan, Dylan (March 10, 2025). Billionaires at Trump's Swearing-In Have Since Lost \$209 Billion. Bloomberg: <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2025-03-10/billionaires-at-trump-s-swearing-in-have-since-lost-200-billion>

To me, this is another proof that Trump is not really an oligarch, even though some may perceive this evidence as minuscule and vacuous, but then again, the modern rendition of the originally ancient Greek model is adventurous in itself: None of the most outspoken or powerful supporters of the supposed oligarchs have benefited greatly from their puppet's instalment at the nation's highest-ranking office. Instead, all of them have conceded some of their wealth to alternating degrees. Compare this again to the Russian dictator whose lackeys have garnered great wealth throughout, unimpeded even when the war against Ukraine was initiated in two phases, first in 2014, and second in 2022. If Trump were an oligarch, he would be the most incapable in modern history.

As a small sidenote: There was a recent happening in front of the White House with a select press entourage where, due to the aforementioned slump the Tesla stock took, the President has personally peddled the Tesla as a brand and purchased one for his presidential fleet in the process: C-SPAN (March 11, 2025). President Trump Speaks to Reporters with Elon Musk Amid Tesla Stock Slump. Link: <https://www.c-span.org/program/white-house-event/president-trump-speaks-to-reporters-with-elon-musk-amid-tesla-stock-slump/657083>

After the event was published in the news, some netizens have grown furious if they hadn't laughed about the ridicule of the whole event, also alleging that he had violated the law; that his sales event fell under 5 C.F.R. § 2635.702(c). Others have mentioned Pub. L. 76-252, alias "The Hatch Act". At first thought I wondered whether the President counted as a federal employee too, given that this is what both legal codes speak about when they prohibit them

in post-Soviet Russia since its demise in the early 1990's, where at least a few spin-offs achieved (near-)monopolistic powers in their respective branches<sup>11</sup>. Perhaps Musk thought that he could land a coup, but he finally had to realise that he too cannot control the madman that Kissinger tried to sell to foreign leaders to earn their submission.

Speaking of Musk, we will have to come back to him and his role once more before we will end this text with a lengthier conclusion, speaking about both his role and what we have to make of the developments in the White House under Trump 2.0. Although I think that some tendencies already clarify.



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from any pernicious activities (think about Sens. Kelly Loeffler's and Richard Burr's (both Republicans from North Carolina) inside trading after a committee session (Jalonick, Mary Clare; Slodysko, Brian (March 20, 2020). Senators deny trading on virus info as scrutiny mounts. AP News: <https://apnews.com/article/health-ap-top-news-virus-outbreak-politics-richard-burr-5d0279fc73d040a1a287f47ed20b4fd5>), and as it so happens, that is what it says in the respective definition in 5 U.S.C § 2105(a)(1)(A). Therefore, technically, one could see if they could get him to at least pay fees for this exploitation of the White House as an exhibition for his adviser's main business, since he seems to treat his consultative role as nothing but a governmental side hustle.

## An Adviser or a Czar?

“οὐδ’ οἱ σοφοί γε δαίμονες κεκλημένοι  
 πτηνῶν ὀνείρων εἰσὶν ἀψευδέστεροι.  
 πολὺς ταραγμὸς ἔν τε τοῖς θείοις ἔνι  
 καὶ τοῖς βροτείοις: ἔν δὲ λυπεῖται μόνον,  
 ὃς οὐκ ἄφρων ὢν μάντεων πεισθεὶς λόγοις  
 ὄλωλεν — ὥς ὄλωλε τοῖσιν εἰδόσιν.”<sup>123</sup>

Before we are headed for the conclusion of this text, we should ask ourselves one more question. We have hitherto understood that Musk runs an agency and therefore exploits powers that he legally doesn’t have, but as he works under the auspice of a rogue President who professes breaching legal boundaries against the slowly grinding mills of the judiciary system, he enjoys some leeway to create damage before the cleaning personnel arrives to sweep the rubble. Besides advisers of infinite amount, Presidents of the United States are also free to employ so-called czars. For starters, they have got nothing to do with the ancient Russian rulers of the same name, and when their roles in the White House were first discussed, inattentive Senators had to be assured just that<sup>124</sup>. But the story doesn’t end there: Next to the question of why they are named after Russian monarchs (at least that is never explained), the question was also what their role would be next to the preëxisting advisers; what additional value would they bring in at the taxpayers’ expense? In the same hearing, one witness in the hearing has understood them as “inferior officers” under the Appointments Clause<sup>125</sup> (alias Const. Art. 2, sect. 2, cl. 2), where they also discussed the question of why they weren’t obliged to undergo the electoral

<sup>123</sup> Ευριπίδης, Ἰφιγένεια ἐν Ταύροις, στίχους 570—575.

<sup>124</sup> J-111-54. Examining the History and Legality of Executive Branch Czars. Hearing before the Committee on the Judiciary. United States Senate. 111<sup>th</sup> Cong. Page 40 (Testimony by Sen. Richard J. Durbin of Illinois)

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, page 2. (Introduction by Sen. Russell D. Feingold of Wisconsin)

Other speakers who too have picked up the so-called Appointments Clause have come to the opposite conclusion, arguing that those czars were in fact addressed by it and therefore had to be confirmed by the Senate. See *ibid.*, page 61 (Statement by John C. Harrison, professor of law at the University of Virginia)

process in both chambers of Congress. But other speakers have pointed out that unlike those officers summarised in the aforementioned Constitutional clause, they do jobs that were not yet considered by the Framers<sup>126</sup>, and until the Obama administration during whose this Congressional hearing was held, no amendments were added to the “Appointments Clause”, so that legislators left themselves in the obscure on how to handle those special kinds of White House employees. One could argue that czars were specialised advisers who counsel the President on specific issues, such as climate change. The question would therefore be: What do regular advisers advise the President on? Are they polymaths who can give advice on any issue under the sun? Obviously not, but their role is not more defined in the books, which gives them some space on how to exercise their job, whereas the czars have got outlined *métiers*<sup>127</sup>. During the hearing, funnily, one speaker mentioned that the employment of such czars were legally permissible as long as those czars did not violate any rules<sup>128</sup>. But could this be a sufficient requirement when it comes to arbitrarily employing additional staff to the White House under a new title, next to the other unofficial staff (i.e. those who too do not undergo hearings at the Senate)? If we took our

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<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, page 38. (Testimony by Sen. John Cornyn of Texas)

<sup>127</sup> And on that particular purpose, two authors who we are going to take under deeper consideration within a minute have already let the cat out of the bag by means of one nifty quote: “Certainly presidents can seek advice, but once they establish a new government structure independent of Congress, they are in violation of the Constitution.” (Sollenberger, Mitchel A.; Rozell, Mark J. (2012). *The President’s Czars. Undermining Congress and the Constitution*. Lawrence (KS): University Press of Kansas. Page 20) It may be meaningless to quote someone on that, but it helps to have it pointed out by someone with more authority on the subject than the layman blogger who has never steeped into legal territory beforehand. It also shows that we do speak about a banality in hindsight: That we seem to deal with two layers of presidential advisers that didn’t need to exist in the first place. If the President needed more advisers, he could hire them as such. But he has no authority to hire someone on the basis of undermining Congress by relaying its Committees’ work into his own home. And this is the theme we are going to discuss hereinafter: The czar as a means of undermining Congress. The striking title, normally unheard of in university-press publications, makes more sense as we proceed.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, page 46 (Statement by T. J. Halstead, deputy assistant director of the American Law Division)

understanding of the czars a little more to the extreme, we could argue that they distinguish themselves from the advisers insofar as that they do not only enter with a specific expertise, such as climate change or accountancy, but also do the work that would otherwise be conducted by the House of Representatives<sup>129</sup>. The best definition to the White House czars was possibly given outside of this hearing, and even outside of the book for which Mr. Patterson Jr., cited hereunder in footnote N° 135, was invited: According to Sollenberger and Rozell, a czar is

*“an executive branch official who is not confirmed by the Senate and is exercising final decision-making authority that often entails controlling budgetary programs, administering/coordinating a policy area, or otherwise promulgating rules, regulations, and orders that bind either government officials and/or the private sector.”*<sup>130</sup>

This definition also covers a good part of the czars that were mentioned as employed by the Obama administration, who we will focus in this chapter too, mostly because I find it the most interesting and most contemporary to concern ourselves with. There was of course, in the beginning of this text, the reference to then-VPOTUS Kamala Harris as she was rumoured to function as then-POTUS Joe Biden’s “border czar”<sup>131</sup>, but this could also be understood as the meagre attempt to taint her in her job to the “Fox News audience” (i.e. manifest Trump voters) as an asset and reason why the US are allegedly being “flooded” with migrants and illegal aliens. The two sources I have cited hereunder have both referred to a short snippet in an address Biden gave almost four years ago; to spare you clicking on either article, here is the passage both have referred to:

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, page 5 (Statement by Mr. Bradley H. Patterson Jr., book author). Otherwise, the page mentioned under footnote N° 125 is applicable to this.

<sup>130</sup> Mitchel A. Sollenberger & Mark J. Rozell., *ibid.*, page 7.

<sup>131</sup> Knight, Stef W. (July 24, 2024). Harris border confusion haunts her new campaign. Axios: <https://www.axios.com/2024/07/24/kamala-harris-border-czar-immigratin>

Hackman, Michelle (July 22, 2024). Analysis: Was Kamala Harris Actually Biden’s ‘Border Czar’?. Wall Street Journal: <https://www.wsj.com/livecoverage/biden-drops-out-election-2024/card/analysis-was-kamala-harris-actually-biden-s-border-czar--KUegJoyUmHcgDoGmRoUW>

*“In addition to that, there’s about five other major things she’s handling, but I’ve asked her, the VP, today – because she’s the most qualified person to do it – to lead our efforts with Mexico and the Northern Triangle and the countries that help – are going to need help in stemming the movement of so many folks, stemming the migration to our southern border.”<sup>132</sup>*

It would require us to have a separate definition of the border czar to see whether this were enough to call the VPOTUS the border czar too, given that what Biden has mentioned is what you would expect a Vice President to do: To maintain good relations with the US’ allies and diplomatic partners. In Germany, the Federal President (Bundespräsident) too frequently travels to other nations to maintain good relations and keep in touch with their executive leaders. In Harris’ case, this representative job is linked to actual work, mainly that of mitigating the exodus of peoples from their homelands to the United States. Does this make her a czar? President Biden has later mentioned that she’s “leading the effort” but would not do the full job alone. If that were the standard job description for czars, we could say that they functioned as middlemen between the White House and the respective departments<sup>133</sup>. But the history has taught us otherwise. Woodrow B. Wilson, the first modern-era President of our time, has used his power to appoint czars to monitor and administrate food and energy supplies, and those czars, we could say, have legislated like the President’s extended arm<sup>134</sup>, also in violation of the aforementioned Constitution and the assessment of one of the Senate hearing’s speakers<sup>128</sup>. There were no legal challenges to this appointment, so that Wilson departed unscathed on that issue, and fast forward to the early 2000’s, George W. Bush could do the same with his so-called “faith czar”<sup>135</sup>. On the follow-up page to

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<sup>132</sup> The Biden White House (March 24, 2021). Remarks by President Biden and Vice President Harris in a Meeting on Immigration. The National Archives: <https://bidenwhitehouse.archives.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/03/24/remarks-by-president-biden-and-vice-president-harris-in-a-meeting-on-immigration/>

<sup>133</sup> J-III-54. *Examining the History &c.*, page 95. (Letter by White House Counsel Gregory B. Craig)

<sup>134</sup> Mitchel A. Sollenberger & Mark J. Rozell., *ibid.*, pp. 47-48.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, page 139.

that, we learn about one interesting quote that also showed the single most important (because existing) limitation to the czar's powers: That he serves only one person, and that is the President. Being a legislator *pro forma*, that makes sense, and would also be on par with the typical civil service official as employed under 18 U.S.C. § 1916(1). The difference remains the power to legislate at the President's behest. As Kevin Sholette wrote:

*"[...] the best definition for a federal 'officer' is someone vested with the duty of exercising sovereign authority of the United States, for the benefit of the public, except where that duty is only contractual, personal, or only occasional and intermittent."*<sup>136</sup>

Combine this knowledge with that of what we know from the definitions for federal employees and related personnel, and we see that no statutory law matches the czars. They therefore exist outside of the law, giving the President a free hand in delegating tasks to them. They likewise enjoy freedoms to exercise their job as they deem it appropriate. At a different point during the Senate hearing, Tom Coburn<sup>137</sup> cited Public Law 95-570 as an argument that the President were not required to send his czars to the Senate for confirmation hearings, but as this law also referred to federal employees, to which the czar is not eligible, the President acted well within his rights to not send them there<sup>138</sup>. Because of the informational scarcity, this chapter will end up shorter than the previous one, but the rundown remains the same as before: Congress needs to become aware of its power again, and of its duty to check upon the President rather than concern only about the draft bills handed down to its desks for evaluation and discussion like clerks in an open-plan office. They are the horde

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<sup>136</sup> Sholette, Kevin (2010) "The American Czars," *Cornell Journal of Law and Public Policy*: Vol. 20: Iss. 1, Article 6. Page 235. Perm. Available at: <https://scholarship.law.cornell.edu/cjlp/vol20/iss1/6>

<sup>137</sup> J-III-54. *Examining the History &c.*, page 5 (Statement by Senator Tom Coburn of Oklahoma).

<sup>138</sup> Pub. L. 95-570 § 107(b)(1)(A); (b)(2) - I have cited it here again because the Hon. Tom Coburn did not mention any numbers in particular but only the Public Law in general. I have therefore pointed out some passages from it because I find them of interest as they lay out some of the permissible banisters for the President. To us it is of no closer interest because, as I have written in the main text, they address federal employees. As we have read in 5 U.S.C § 2105(a)(1), there are no czars.



of elected officials who together make up the backbone of US Democracy. If it weren't for them, and if the worst-case scenario will take place, we are going to spectate it live on stage, the President can indeed act without any restraints, lest for the courts who, as I have explained in a footnote above<sup>64</sup>, rely on others to implement their verdicts in public policy and the President's benevolence to listen and be considerate. But autocrats are neither, and so, a President could also just leave them behind to rot or abolish them and turn them adrift. Either case would be a major severance of Democratic institutions and a lesson on Democracy's fragility.

However, Sollenberger and Rozell, who I actually wanted to refer to again, have written in their own conclusion that the introduction of czars bore a multitude of problems for the body politic in the United States, some of the reasons which I do not perceive as all that weighty, so that in my opinion, they missed a mark. *Quoi qu'il en soit*, one of the final passages before a subordinate headline to the final chapter raised an eyebrow:

*"[...] czars have further fueled the concentration of executive power, undermined democratic controls, added more layers of decision making in government, and, for all of that, they have generally not done a good job of making the executive branch bureaucracy more effective and efficient."<sup>139</sup> (sic!)*

Those are major issues that executive branch czars produce, and it is also one of the issues I have raised with Franklin D. Roosevelt's style of governance, as he to me was one of the first US-American Presidents who conducted a more internalised governance, away from the Congress and happening exclusively in the White House. "Politicking from the green table", one could call it. Prior to this page, I have mentioned that czars could function as middlemen between the White House and the various departments, but we should ask ourselves: Is there a need for such contractors? Technically, no, because the President must stay in constant contact with his secretaries and ministers because he cannot conduct policies all by himself; he has got those secretaries and ministers for the same purpose that he may appoint czars: To have specialised clerks who will inform themselves about subjects related to their office, get in touch with relevant individuals and groups, and conceptualise policies that will be presented to the

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<sup>139</sup> Mitchel A. Sollenberger & Mark J. Rozell, *ibid.*, page 169. Underscores mine.

President who may give his OK and hand them over to Congress to discuss, negotiate, compromise and finalise them for the President to sign it into law. This is an overly simplified course for policies to materialise, and perhaps fallacious too. But the point is: One cannot know everything on their own, one usually needs a troupe of experts and enablers at their hand. But those must be able to think for themselves on the one hand and be scrutinised by independent watchdog agents on the other hand, to warrant for their legal conduct. The factor of scrutinization brings us back to the Congress too. But I can only repeat myself and end up in a circular argument. Therefore, let me keep it short: There is no need for czars, in effect. Both Presidents Trump and Obama have shown us how the Executive Order power can be exploited for swift results in terms of legislation, because courts cannot keep up with the possible deluge of EOs, or because none breach any laws per se. Czars were not required unless one wanted to bridge the dilemma between a perceptibly authoritarian president who undermined Congressional authority and a perceptibly slow, dragging President who did not get anything done because he got bogged down in bureaucratic details. For the latter, the czars could relieve the tensions either because they do not function as lobbyists amongst Congressmembers who were being persuaded about the President's agenda and to consequentially vote in his favour. Like the officers, they work for the President, within his realm. They subdue his responsibility for coöperation between parties and even his departments, an essential Democratic feature. Let me therefore leave a few suggestions for amendments to "democratise" the czar in case we do not plan to abolish their existence as a whole (although I do not see a need for it; it should have become clear by now that there is no need for it when a President coöperates with all entities equally):

1. Introduce Senate confirmation hearings for czars, like all regular offices undergo them;
2. Formalise their role in government in the US Code so that they can also become eligible to Congressional and legal sanctions in case of their violation;
3. Leave them out of legislative functions or anything else that is understood as reserved for either Congressmembers or the President.

Researchers have additionally contemplated the idea of term limits<sup>140</sup>, for which I am open too, although the czars were not the first ones that came to mind when thinking about introducing them in the governmental policies. But in general, term limits can be approved in order for policymakers and state and federal officials to not accommodate themselves too much in their role, to become lazy, experienced (“routiniert” in German) and indifferent; in the fashion of “May the devil care for the future, as long as I get my pay by the end of the month”. It makes corruption and cabal less attractive and maintains a fresh influx of younger politicians. At best it would prevent aging and dying in office as it happens/-ed with the likes of Chuck Grassley, Dianne Feinstein and John Lewis, next to the infamous Strom Thurmond. Term limits for the President were the only ones imposed so far, and only lately so; the anti-Federalists weren’t even that outspoken about it<sup>141</sup>, no matter how much they promoted the limitation of the Executive’s powers. George Washington was not only the United States’ first President but also the first one to have been restricted by a term limit. The phenomenon was this: That the term limits were not in place yet but he imposed it upon himself in order to show that he would not be a King<sup>142</sup>. This stands in crass contrast to the incumbent 47<sup>th</sup> President

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<sup>140</sup> Vaughn, J. S. (2014). The contemporary presidency reconsidering presidential policy czars. *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, 44(3), page 17. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/psq.12148>

<sup>141</sup> Cornelius (11<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> December 1787), Essay by Cornelius. In: Storing, Herbert J.; Dry, Murray (Eds.) *The Complete Anti-Federalist*, vol. iv. Chicago; London: The University of Chicago Press. Page 145.

<sup>142</sup> ... Although he has never said so. But his legacy, recorded in addresses and letters, can only be understood so, as can be his actions, such as the resignation of his role in the army, which too was recorded in a brief speech held before he extended his sword to the Continental Congress on the day before Christmas, 1783:

“III. Washington’s Address to Congress Resigning his Commission, [23 December 1783],” Founders Online, National Archives, <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-06-02-0319-0004>. [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 6, 21 May 1781-1 March 1784, ed. Julian P. Boyd. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1952, pp. 411-412.]

Meanwhile in his Farewell Address, he has made it clearer that he wanted to resign because he was exhausted, which is understandable given what he has experienced throughout his official life as both a soldier and a statesman, while the symbolic value of him not running for

who has gleefully shared a meme of himself upon a cover of the TIME Magazine, donning a crown while smirking upon the reader; the lower left corner bears the words “Long Live the King”, a reaction to his revocation of the congestion law recently ratified in New York City to both provide for cleaner air in the metropolis while also easing the infamous rush-hour traffic in the Big Apple<sup>143</sup>.

President again despite a unanimous election by the Electoral College predestined him for what Franklin D. Roosevelt would do centuries later, provoking what would later be known as Amendment 22—the term limit of two tenures. As he has stated in said address:

*“I constantly hoped, that it would have been much earlier in my power, consistently with motives, which I was not at liberty to disregard, to return to that retirement, from which I had been reluctantly drawn. The strength of my inclination to do this, previous to the last Election, had even led to the preparation of an address to declare it to you; but mature reflection on the then perplexed & critical posture of our Affairs with foreign Nations, and the unanimous advice of persons entitled to my confidence, impelled me to abandon the idea.”*

(“Farewell Address, 19 September 1796,” Founders Online, National Archives, <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/05-20-02-0440-0002>. [Original source: *The Papers of George Washington*, Presidential Series, vol. 20, 1 April–21 September 1796, ed. David R. Hoth and William M. Ferraro. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2019, page 704.]

Besides his exasperation, he as a statesman of grandeur and support few succeeding US-American Presidents would enjoy, he was still concerned about the optics his presentation would uphold abroad. He knew that his was supposed to be a beacon looking for its epigones; a perception one would wish the incumbent President to adapt and orient his actions around, rather than acting like a farcical grotesqueness.

<sup>143</sup> Oreskes, Benjamin (Feb. 19, 2025). ‘Long Live the King’: Trump Likens Himself to Royalty on Truth Social. New York Times: <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/02/19/us/politics/trump-king-image.html>

As one can read in the newspaper article, the photo was also shared via the White House’s official Twitter account, where it can be found under the following link: <https://x.com/WhiteHouse/status/1892295984928993698>. The mock TIME cover was a reaction to him describing himself as a King—whether as a joke or because he holds genuine pursuits to become the first monarch of the United States cannot be told for sure as he dons both the mind of a schoolboy and a demented man with no boundaries imposed by his next ones: <https://trumpstruth.org/statuses/29758>.

The most interesting question, though, is what is now the law when it comes to the separation of state and central-government ordinances. When *Roe v. Wade* was overturned in

Coming back to the original topic before we close it to finally access our Conclusion, one may have wondered what the czars have go to do with the DOGE. The answer is of course: Nothing. From President Biden's address we could tell that there doesn't seem to be a formal process under which czars are

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*Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, 597 U.S. 215 (2022), it was ruled that it was up to the states themselves to decide whether abortion rights were to be granted or not. New York City, despite what some may believe, is not a state by itself, but a city upon a tongue of land, maybe a peninsula. Whatever it is, the President, in a sign of overburdening power, intervened in the city's affairs and overturned its ruling that in the end did not impose much more than every American is subdued to when arriving at a turnpike. Wouldn't that constitute an interception of the state's sovereignty by several standards? This question must also be asked because so far, for what it's worth, no-one dragged the President before a court for this ludicrous violation of American principles. This text gives a good overview of how such behaviour is also reflected in the most recent Supreme Court rulings, showing good continuity at least until 2020, which was before *Dobbs vs. Jackson* was decided, marking at least to me a break in this tradition of protecting the individual from harm by overreach:

Bellia Jr, A. J., & Clark, B. R. (2023). State Sovereign Immunity and the New Purposivism. *Wm. & Mary L. Rev.*, 65, 485. Perm. Link: <https://heinonline.org/HOL/LandingPage?handle=hein.journals/wmlr65>

I am not a fan of politicising the Supreme Court because it is mostly driven by people who learn from newspaper headlines about the politically most infuriating rulings, disregarding the lesser-known ones of greater interest for legal scholars and professionals who earn their daily bread from the courts' work. Newt Gingrich, for example, is lambasted by many left of the aisle as a typical 'Trump nominee, ignoring his exhilarating commitment to Native Americans' rights that might even wrest some support for him from the leftists of the "Land Back" movement. Justices Amy Coney Barrett and Brett Kavanaugh met the same fate, but have shown to be more impartial than was feared during their moot sessions. I must confess that I was no stranger to such feelings, but they have vanished ever since the two of them gained a track record on the bench. It does not mean that I blinded before the two justices who have since disgraced the seats they occupy by begetting probable violations under the Hatch Act, were it applicable to justices. Justice Sonia Sotomayor begot a similar sin when she blackmailed public libraries to stock her book, but this misdemeanour means next to nothing next to her two colleagues crimes. I am talking of course about justices Samuel Alito and Clarence Thomas, the two flagship reasons for why the Supreme Court needs (1) term limits, (2) an independent watchdog with sanctioning power, and (3) an independent office obliged with nominating successors to the nation's highest bar, the latter to protect the court from unsolicited allegations of a politicisation of the judiciary system.

nominated: The two outlets we have cited in reference thereto—Axios and the Wall Street Journal—both referred to the passage we cited when they rumoured that Vice President Harris could become the border czar even though the term never was uttered. It was the mere listing of foreign relations to countries known to emit a lot of refugees as part of her job that made her the nominal “border czar”. Employing a border czar is as informal as is befriending someone: It happens all naturally, with no explicit expression thereof. Another obvious nuisance that would also make it hard to understand in which pay grade this person was to be listed. The whole process is botched in such a way that it should be a crime to maintain it as such. But all of this doesn’t matter for now because Musk is not a “government efficiency czar”, he is an adviser supposed to counsel other departments on how they could streamline their processes to become more effective; except that he doesn’t do that and instead dispatches his henchmen like a mosquito injects toxic material into the bloodstream of a host while sucking out its blood analogously. He is technically not an adviser either, given that both the czar and the adviser report to and work for the President alone, with no affairs outside of the White House. Were he a czar, he could not have broken laws from the regard of his office, but simply because he exercised the work that would be technically the OPM’s or the department heads’, perhaps Congress’. Yet the actual reason I brought this topic up to was simply because I found it of use to explain why he doesn’t fit it either because the czar, as a grey eminence, could have been an alternative job description different from the official President’s, given that he has as little regard for formulaic procedures as he has for the incumbent nomenclature and the US Code. It could have therefore been that he employed a czar he mistakenly described as an adviser. As it turned out, Musk is neither, and therefore has got no *raison d’être* anywhere near the governmental body at the moment, and should instead return to Houston to take over his work as CEO of Tesla and StarLink, besides others.

## Conclusion

On March 11, 2025, the House Ways and Means Committee held a hearing on the subjects of Social Security and healthcare. They invited, or so it seemed, Elon Musk to testify before the Committee, a turn that is both symbolic and based on solid interest: Symbolic, because Representative Al Franken of Texas' 09<sup>th</sup> district was thrown out of the Congress during President Donald J. Trump's Joint Congress after he shouted at him that he should keep his hands off Social Security<sup>144</sup>. And based on solid interests because DOGE has already slashed a good part of public healthcare in supposed order to cut costs<sup>145</sup>. The problem is: He was absent. And this has driven Representative John B. Larson of Connecticut's 01<sup>st</sup> District to the point where he lost his cool and started hollering at his Republican colleagues asking where he had been, how it could be that he were absent while “sees all these supposed abuses—why isn't he here to explain them?”<sup>146</sup> The question is whether he was invited or subpoenaed: An

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<sup>144</sup> Freking, Kevin (March 07, 2025). The House censures Democratic Rep. Al Green for disrupting Trump's joint address to Congress. AP News: <https://apnews.com/article/house-censure-green-trump-joint-address-61d82026983c99a269209bbeb32b45a5>

<sup>145</sup> Megerian, Chris (March 10, 2025). Musk eyes Social Security and benefit programs for cuts while claiming widespread fraud. AP News: <https://apnews.com/article/elon-musk-donald-trump-doge-b21b74f56f30012a6450a629e7232a1a>

Copp, Tara; Johnson, Carla K. (Feb. 27, 2025). VA pauses billions in cuts lauded by Musk as lawmakers and veterans decry loss of critical care. AP News: <https://apnews.com/article/doge-veterans-affairs-cuts-health-services-contracts-9a726b744e402da01d711023b0fc49a1>

<sup>146</sup> John B. Larson (March 13, 2025). Democrat Erupts at Elon Musk During DOGE Hearing. House of Representatives: <https://larson.house.gov/media-center/in-the-news/democrat-erupts-elon-musk-during-doge-hearing>

You can also watch the full recorded hearing under the following link, whereas the link will direct you immediately to the raucous remarks by Mr. Larson; feel free to rewind the video to start from the beginning: Associated Press (March 13, 2025). LIVE: Ways and Means Committee reviews resolutions on government access to finances, Social Security. YouTube: [https://www.youtube.com/live/do\\_-67PcJ\\_c?si=Zo7HKiY6DSjew4kN&t=2678](https://www.youtube.com/live/do_-67PcJ_c?si=Zo7HKiY6DSjew4kN&t=2678)

invitation is no official document, nor an official order, it is nothing but an informal enquiry to demand one's presence somewhere for some purpose. Meanwhile a Congressional subpoena is regulated under 28 U.S.C. §2521 in general and under 5 U.S.C. §8480 with special emphasis on the Congress' authority to subpoena entities it is interested in testifying. Had they subpoenaed him, we would have heard about his absence in the news because then, they could hold him in contempt, as outlined under letter (c). Mr. Larson's tantrum could therefore be nothing but hollow words, but in the end, it wouldn't have mattered anyway because issue is greater: Republicans are slowly learning that Musk's actions are unpopular amongst their constituents<sup>147</sup>, but still they hold

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<sup>147</sup> Biba, Jacob (March 14, 2025). Chuck Edwards faced Asheville Town Hall backlash; people angered by Trump, Musk's actions. Asheville Citizen-Times: <https://eu.citizen-times.com/story/news/local/2025/03/14/edwards-met-with-anger-over-trump-musk-at-town-hall/82365021007/>

Thornebrugh, Kaye (Feb. 25, 2025). Coeur d'Alene prosecutors dismiss citation against woman dragged from town hall, city revokes security company's business license. Coeur d'Arlène / Port Falls Press: <https://cdapress.com/news/2025/feb/25/coeur-dalene-prosecutors-dismiss-citation-against-woman-dragged-from-town-hall-city-revokes-security-companys-business-license/>

Jimison, Robert (Feb. 23, 2025). Republicans Face Angry Voters at Town Halls, Hinting at Broader Backlash. New York Times: <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/02/23/us/politics/republicans-congress-town-halls-trump.html>

Caracta, Bella (March 19, 2025). Nebraska Rep. Mike Flood hosts heated town hall amid warnings against holding public meetings. First Alert 6 WOWT: <https://www.wowt.com/2025/03/19/nebraska-congressman-hosts-heated-town-hall-amid-warnings-against-holding-public-meetings/>

And because of those reactions—there are possibly more, but those are the two that I have heard about so far—have led House Speaker Mike Johnson of Louisiana's 04<sup>th</sup> district to the wisest advice to approach such distraught: To not attend townhalls in their districts at all:

Mascaro, Lisa (March 04, 2025). Speaker Johnson tells GOP lawmakers to skip town halls after an onslaught of protests. AP :News: <https://apnews.com/article/town-halls-musk-doge-trump-gop-749d91ea516284057e4c7bcb1615527e>

There was also information that some of those uproars were intentionally fuelled by Democratic activists who “infiltrated” the citizen events, but this must not fool us into believing that all registered Republicans were cheerful about the cuts; it is much like the hiring of a claqueur for an audience: One can be sure that the people like the show, or else the



onto him because they do not dare to disgruntle the President; and so, they make up arguments on why what Musk does is the right thing to do, and that the immediate pain were only a temporary need for long-term pleasures later. Perhaps we are going to see some Republicans who utter opposition because they didn't plan not run for reelection, such Dutch courage as last noticed by Pat Toomey, the former Senator from Pennsylvania; Mitt Romney, the former Senator from Utah who also ran for President against Barack H. Obama, and so on. Even against the deluge of Executive Orders, something that was previously lambasted by Republicans during the Obama<sup>148</sup> and the Biden<sup>149</sup> presidencies, they have seldom issued memoranda or words of consternation<sup>81</sup>. If one takes a look into the past, one sees that not only Republicans were more critical about the presidential use of Executive Orders, but also their affiliated think tanks: The Heritage Foundation, for example, wrote an essay on how this constituted an anti-American act that should only be used in the direst of times<sup>150</sup>. To mention the Heritage Foundation of all organisations is particularly rich also because only eleven years after the below-cited report, the same think tank has published the oft-cited "Mandate for Leadership", alias "Project 2025", which frequently recommended to President Trump to make use of his

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TV quotas would prove that the applause were artificially created or run from an audio track like in a sitcom. As for the townhalls, read

Peoples, Steve; Mascaro, Lisa; Groves, Stephen (March 01, 2025). Democratic activists fueled anti-Trump protests at GOP town halls but also rage at their own party. AP News: <https://apnews.com/article/democrats-trump-grassroots-constitutional-crisis-bd53cc6ec73f654816c5f4c7bce5fd88>

<sup>148</sup> Gibson, Ginger; Kim, Seung Min (Jan. 29, 2014). Republicans say Obama overstepped. POLITICO: <https://www.politico.com/story/2014/01/republicans-state-of-the-union-2014-barack-obama-102783>

<sup>149</sup> Blake, Aaron (Jan. 21, 2021). The GOP's oversimplified pushback on Biden's executive actions. The Washington Post: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2021/01/21/gops-oversimplified-pushback-bidens-executive-actions/>

<sup>150</sup> Slattery, E., & Kloster, A. (2014). An Executive Unbound: The Obama Administration's Unilateral Actions. *Heritage Foundation Legal Memorandum*, (108). <https://www.heritage.org/the-constitution/report/executive-unbound-the-obama-administrations-unilateral-actions>

power to take unilateral actions to push their desired policies through<sup>151</sup>. On the internet, one would call this “our guy” behaviour: That certain things are OK as long as the right person, “our guy”, does it; if the other side does it, it is to be condemned in the highest condemnations. It would not be the first time that Republicans could be alleged of hypocrisy. It is a theme that we can observe frequently in parliamentary politics: That one will be pious Christian by day and a sinful whoremonger after nightfall.

We have already spent enough time decrying Republican hypocrisy in this text, so that we do not need to unfold this subject for another time. Instead, we should make some things clear: No, President Trump is not an oligarch. His



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employment of Elon Musk as an adviser with overarching authorities does not make him one. It is furthermore wrong to believe that Musk were the “actual President” of the United States because he allegedly fired all the federal employees. Whether he files the orders to fire those people or Trump does it does not make a difference because if the former applies, he still does it at Trump’s bidding or with his graces. As a compromise, we could argue that the two of them work as a duo, the first shared presidency; but only temporary, as we remember: In

order to maintain the aforementioned advisership for special conditions according to 5 U.S.C. §3161, he will only stay for 120 days and leave by July 04, 2026. To those to whom it does not make sense because the calculation does not match out, they are right, but this would only make sense if we assumed a law-

<sup>151</sup> Roberts, Kevin; Dans, Paul; Groves, Steven (Eds.) (2023) Mandate for Leadership. The Conservative Promise. Pp. 151-3; 261; 357 ff. ©c.

abiding presidency. It would be comparably worse when it were a typo and should actually read July 04, 2025.

As for what the Trump presidency is, things stand far worse: He is an authoritarian by the book. And I mean it. According to the “Oxford Dictionary”, authoritarianism is “A style of government in which the rulers demand unquestioning obedience from the ruled.”<sup>152</sup> But the author has also mentioned that common use of the word has watered its meaning down (think Oligarchy, again), so that it is now understood as “[...] overweening and intolerant government irrespective of the justification or lack of it, of such practices. Thus it often means exactly the same as despotism, an older word.” The question is whether we could assign Trump the presumption of fealty from US-Americans; we have mentioned beforehand that he expects that of his staff to the degree that Bolton called it fealty<sup>45, 46, 72</sup>. What we do know about Trump’s thinking of the American public is from the last electoral campaign when he, for the first time on the public record, used dehumanising language against the opposition, comparing them to vermin and just generally subhuman<sup>153</sup>. In this case, I think that Godwin’s law<sup>154</sup> does not apply because we have got exhaustive research on how dehumanising language paves the way for totalitarian rulership. The best example is Hannah Arendt’s “Origins of Totalitarianism” and Victor Klemperer’s “LTI”<sup>155</sup>. He hasn’t continued in the same rabid fashion, but the tone was set no less. In the two aforementioned sources, no explicit reference to such dehumanising language can be found, but if we take a look into Adolf

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<sup>152</sup> Allison, Lincoln. “Authoritarianism”. In: Brown, Garrett Wallace; McLean, Iain; McMillan, Alistair (2018) (Eds.) *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Politics and International Relations*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Page 32.

<sup>153</sup> Gold, Michael (Nov. 11, 2023). In Veterans Day Speech, Trump Promises to ‘Root Out’ the Left. New York Times: <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/11/11/us/politics/trump-new-hampshire-veterans.html>

<sup>154</sup> <https://www.oxfordreference.com/display/10.1093/oi/authority.20110810105009431>

<sup>155</sup> Arendt, Hannah. *Elemente und Ursprünge totaler Herrschaft*. München, Zürich: Piper Verlag. pp. 254–259. 565–566; 579–594; &c. See also: Lang, Johannes. “Explaining genocide: Hannah Arendt and the social-scientific concept of dehumanization.” *The Anthem Companion to Hannah Arendt* (2017). Pp. 175–197.

Klemperer, Victor (2018). *LTI. Notizbuch eines Philologen*. Leipzig: Reclam. Pp. 199–203.

Hitler's infamous manifesto, "Mein Kampf", we will find that he described Jews as "Parasites", something not too far away from Trump's address to "Antifa" and "the radical left thugs that live like vermin within the confines of our country". It does not take a lot to think that he may have been inspired by Hitler who spoke similarly about the "Jewish parasite". As he wrote in his manifesto:

*„Er ist und bleibt der typische Parasit, ein Schmarotzer, der wie ein schädlicher Bazillus sich immer mehr ausbreitet, sowie nur ein günstiger Nährboden dazu einlädt. Die Wirkung seines Daseins aber gleicht ebenfalls der von Schmarotzern; wo er auftritt, stirbt das Wirtsvolk nach kürzerer oder längerer Zeit ab.“<sup>156</sup>*

Fair enough, Trump abstained from speaking about an infested popular body (Volkskörper), but otherwise, this is food for the allegations that he had a copy of his manifesto lying on his nightstand, although one implicit reference does not suffice for me as evidence that he has ever read it. It is about as valuable an information as his alleged inability to read the Constitution out because it were "like a foreign language" to him<sup>157</sup>. Not understanding the Constitution

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<sup>156</sup> Hartmann, Christian; Vordermayer, Thomas; Plöckinger, Othmar; Töppel, Roman (Eds.) (2016) Hitler, Mein Kampf. Eine kritische Edition. Band I. München, Berlin: Institut für Zeitgeschichte. pp. 322–323. (Only the second page features the quote, but it is of interest to read both pages in which he rants about a supposed Jewish parasite. In reference to the Trumpists, you could call this a "Jewish Derangement Syndrome")

<sup>157</sup> Kentish, Benjamin (March 20, 2017). Donald Trump 'kept book of Adolf Hitler's speeches in his bedside cabinet'. The Independent:

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/us-politics/donald-trump-adolf-hitler-books-bedside-cabinet-ex-wife-ivana-trump-vanity-fair-1990-a7639041.html>

The same allegations have reëmerged about two years ago when President Trump has mentioned in public that he had never read the book, which for sure a lot of people could say as it is not a popular addition to one's "TBR". He iterated that statement when allegations of him referencing Hitler when speaking about immigrants "poisoning and destroying the blood of America":

Reid, Tim (December 20, 2023). Trump: I have not read Hitler's 'Mein Kampf'. Reuters: <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/trump-i-have-not-read-hitlers-mein-kampf-2023-12-20/>

In the end, it wouldn't matter whether he has taken inspiration from Hitler or not, as those remarks were dehumanising and racist either way. As for him being unable to read the Constitution because the language were too complex for him, the source is rather dubious as

nonetheless didn't stop him to go for a hail Mary attempt at reinterpreting the Constitution—just this week (March 16, 2025), he has enquired the Supreme Court to allow him to interpret the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment to allow for mass deportations of foreigners from Latin America<sup>158</sup>. Because President Trump is an impatient person, he has moved ahead and reinstated an obsolete law, the so-called “Alien Enemies Act” from 1798<sup>159</sup>, in which noncitizens were required to have lived at least 14 years in the United States before they could apply for citizenship, i.e. naturalisation. When one skims through the debates at that time and the issues opponents of the Acts (there were five of them, as one can read in the sources by the National Archives hereunder), one can notice that some of them feared that it could also lead to an alienation of orderly citizens who immigrated from European countries for the very reasons their nation was established in the first place: To house those who seek refuge from persecution and war, or who sought a better life and start anew, to build a new life by their own means<sup>160</sup>. The Federalists, a party that nowadays is no longer in existence,

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the director who recorded the scene was not contacted to confirm this happening. You can read about it hereunder:

Rucker, Philip; Leonnig, Carol (Jan. 20, 2020). “It’s Like a Foreign Language”: Donald Trump’s Encounter With the Constitution Did Not Go Well. Vanity Fair: <https://www.vanityfair.com/news/2020/01/donald-trump-disastrous-encounter-with-the-constitution-very-stable-genius>

There is nothing wrong with having problems reading your native tongue when it is composed in a more poetic manner, but only when you are still a pupil. As an adult, and also the president of your country, you should be able to at least read it out. Intonation for a poetic voice is an extra reserved for those who profess in the arts and/or philology.

<sup>158</sup> Sherman, Mark; Whitehurst, Lindsay (March 13, 2025). Trump administration asks Supreme Court to partly allow birthright citizenship restrictions. AP News: <https://apnews.com/article/supreme-court-trump-immigration-birthright-citizenship-5f1ebd68996f10a84972108f943476fd>

<sup>159</sup> An Act Concerning Aliens, July 6, 1798; Fifth Congress; Enrolled Acts and Resolutions; General Records of the United States Government; Record Group 11; National Archives. Link: <https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/alien-and-sedition-acts>

<sup>160</sup> As the famous, excessively referenced passage from Emma Lazarus’ “New Colossus”, engraved at the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty reads:

*“Give me your tired, your poor,*

was alleged of restricting citizenship as akin to being born in the United States with no pathway for outsiders to become US citizens<sup>161</sup>—something that we nowadays could allege Republicans too, if they weren't open for “immigrants” from the first world, i.e. Europe. The language of the Act itself could pose problems with statutory law of today. Altogether, there are some hopes for the

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*Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,  
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.  
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,  
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!”*

Throughout President Trump's first tenure, cartoonists and the general public, at least the part affiliated to Democrats, have alleged Republicans of abandoning the foundational principles for either racist or egocentric ideals, underestimating their greatest nation's potency. Republicans in turn claimed that their people should come first, as if social and immigration services were a zero-sum game; that the nation could no longer pretend that it were still in its fancies and about a sixth of its size today. If that were the case now still, they should think about whether they could in all seriousness resurrect laws of the same time, including the Alien Enemies Act. As we can read in an above footnote № 65, the act was clearly passed before the invention of green cards, so that qualified immigrants already up in work in their new homeland are being deported, hence boosting the inevitable brain drain. There's a reason why here in Germany, one core argument by people who proclaim the revocation of certain laws also refer to its age and related obsolescence. To some, this would be the “abortion paragraph” alias §218a, which won't allow doctors, gynaecologists in particular, from “advertising” the availability of abortion services. The Alien Enemies Act is no stranger thereto, and the same goes to Supreme Court justice Samuel Alito's reference to ancient arguments in his argument for the revocation of *Roe v. Wade*. For this subject, read: Armstrong, Ken (May 06, 2022). Draft Overturning *Roe v. Wade* Quotes Infamous Witch Trial Judge With Long-Discredited Ideas on Rape. ProPublica: <https://www.propublica.org/article/abortion-ro-e-wade-alito-scotus-hale#1325809>

One would think that there were provisions that would eliminate rulings and opinions that lacked merit because they, for example, skipped *stare decisis* and instead travelled back in time to find the one ancient scholar who would agree with them, disregarding the fact that they consequentially proved that their views are outdated and lack merit in today's world. Needless to say, there are fields that make good use of ancient wisdom—think about political philosophy, philosophy in general, theology, &c.—but medicine is none of them. Avicenna may be of use in medical history, but not in internal medicine or the likes.

<sup>161</sup> Halperin, Terri Diane (2016). *The Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. Pp. 34–35.

reinvigoration to crush on the floor of reality. Yet in the end, I, as a layman in the field of jurisprudence, couldn't tell what its chances for survival are. And it shall also not be the topic in this chapter.

Trump is an Authoritarian. There is no denial, and never has been; one had to either be stupid, ignorant or in denial of this matter-of-fact. Those who have voted for him did want to have a strongman in office who would guide them, to take matters into his own hands (alone) and to sweep the country clean from its ailments. They didn't care all that much about foreign affairs and wanted to no longer hear of what is going on abroad and where the United States funnelled their money, they wanted the money to stay where it belonged—in the US—and be invested there alone. It is the combination of isolationist policies with protectionist policies when one supports the tariffs for foreign countries that allegedly produced a trade deficit in the United States, no matter how little sense this argument made<sup>162</sup>. They want to see immediate effects, at best beneficial ones, and they find solace in tales of being oppressed and swindled by the rest of the world. As Trump has formulated it during his inaugural address: “[...] we will not allow ourselves to be taken advantage of any longer.”<sup>163</sup> While his first inaugural address was themed around a theme that comes close to T. S. Eliot's famous “Waste Land”, his second is a story of an exasperated man who for once wants to strike back against his exploiters. No matter how often he tries to glorify the United States as the greatest country on earth, he always comes back to themes of the United States being haggard, under a self-effacing leadership and being rotten from the core due to malign forces fighting America from within. It is the theme usually applied by rulers who want to rule with an iron hand, they all needed justifications to wash away worries of a violation of the rule of law, to avert protests that would need to be cracked down pre-emptively. Does this make Donald J. Trump, or his consigliere Elon Musk,

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<sup>162</sup> Amiti, Mary, Stephen J. Redding, and David E. Weinstein. 2019. “The Impact of the 2018 Tariffs on Prices and Welfare.” *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 33 (4): 187–210. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1257/jep.33.4.187>

Bown, Chad P.; Irwin, Douglas A. (March 11, 2025). The Incoherent Case for Tariffs. Foreign Affairs: <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/incoherent-case-tariffs>

<sup>163</sup> The White House (Jan. 20, 2025). The Inaugural Address. Link: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/remarks/2025/01/the-inaugural-address/>

Nazis? Do Trump's racist allusions to Hitler make him a Nazi? I am asking because many people are as quick to call the two of them Nazis as they are to call them oligarchs. And while I have cast away the latter, I also have to cast the first one out. The term "Nazi" is one that is strictly defined based on historical material. The "Oxford Dictionary" defines it as follows:

*"Ideologically, National Socialism combined an extreme form of nationalism (including strongly racist and anti-Semitic beliefs in the superiority of the German-Aryan community over all other peoples and cultures) and a distinctive concept of state-led socialism which was far removed from both revolutionary Marxism and social democracy."*<sup>164</sup>

We could ignore the part about the exclusively Third-Reich context of the ideology and still come to the conclusion that it would be a far fetch to call the two of them Nazis. If he were genuinely anti-Semitic, it still wouldn't stop him from disinherit his daughter for having married a Jew (who he also employed to forge the Abraham Accords in the Middle East, a job that far exceeded the job Jud Süß Oppenheimer was tasked with before his master abandoned him); he has spoken about the "threat of Critical Race Theory" during his first tenure as an ersatz Cultural Marxism<sup>165</sup>, both of which bear as much weight in the United States criticality-wise. He has since switched to DEI and transgender persons during the second tenure, going with the times of his party<sup>166</sup>. We have previously spoken about his plans for mass deportations<sup>167</sup> and how he unearthed obsolete laws from the relics, and while it is discordant and going to hurt the US

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<sup>164</sup> Taylor, Keith. National Socialism. In: Brown, Garrett Wallace; McLean, Iain; McMillan, Alistair (2018) (Eds.) The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Politics and International Relations. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Pp. 378–379.

<sup>165</sup> Ray, Victor (Oct. 02, 2020). Trump calls critical race theory 'un-American.' Let's review. The Washington Post: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2020/10/02/critical-race-theory-101/>

<sup>166</sup> The White House (Feb. 05, 2025). Keeping Men out of Women's Sports. Link: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/02/keeping-men-out-of-womens-sports/>

<sup>167</sup> The White House (Jan. 20, 2025). Protecting the American People against Invasion. Link: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/protecting-the-american-people-against-invasion/>



economy barely as much as the tariffs are going to, it is by far not Nazistic. People tend to confuse racism with Nazism, and while it does little damage in hindsight, it has got the potential to misdirect the public debate by adding useless buzzwords to it, thus giving people reasons to focus on anything but the meaningful part of their iterations. At least it can function as a marker of how much, or little, time they have dedicated to thinking about what is wrong with Trump and in which way he poses dangers to the American people and its government. To even say that he is an authoritarian proves that he can still be stopped because he is not a dictator. In the aforementioned explanation from the “Oxford Dictionary”<sup>152</sup> the author wrote that the term “authoritarianism” is so watered down that it is often blended or confused with the word “despot”, a word one could technically use synonymous to the dictator. The Blackwell Dictionary likened it to absolutism<sup>168</sup>, which does not add anything meaningful to our understanding, only proving that it is another word for one-man rulership. What both the Oxford Dictionary’s definition of Nazism has left out as much as those who call the demolition duo Nazis, moreover, is the attempt to grasp absolute power by decree. We can be sure that besides the assembly-line signage of EOs, President Trump would have lost no time exploring the opportunities to declare a state of emergency due to the “ongoing invasion” from the South by means of “migrant caravans” and Mexican drug cartels. Fair enough, this declaration of national emergency has already happened as early as all of the first-wave EOs<sup>169</sup>, but it hitherto hasn’t caught a lot of attention. 50 U.S.C. §1621 vests the President with abnormal powers, but by now, we should not be surprised. In a properly prepared Democracy, the President couldn’t single-handedly declare national emergencies that would grant him an unchecked hand as outlined under letter (b). So far, Trump may not have made great use of his additional powers, since he desperately tries to revive ancient policies from a time when the US were still at war with the powers of the Old

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<sup>168</sup> Bealey, Frank; Johnson, Allan G. (Eds.) (1999) The Blackwell Dictionary of Political Science. A User’s Guide To Its Items. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers. Page 1.

<sup>169</sup> The White House (Jan. 22, 2025). Fact Sheet: President Donald J. Trump Declares a National Emergency at the Southern Border. Link: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/fact-sheets/2025/01/fact-sheet-president-donald-j-trump-declares-a-national-emergency-at-the-southern-border/>

World. However, this does not mean that the Democratic party and the last Republicans with a spine to check upon their Dear Leader could lower their guards. President Trump's style could be compared to some of the details the English political philosopher Niccolò Machiavelli outlined in his "Principe":

*"Giova ancora assai a uno principe dare di sé esempli rari circ'a' governi di dentro, simili a quelli che si narrano di messer Bernabò da Milano, quando si ha l'occasione di qualcuno che operi qualche cosa straordinaria o in bene o in male nella vita civile, e pigliare uno modo circa premiarlo o punirlo, di che si abbia a parlare assai. E soprattutto uno principe si debbe ingegnare dare di sé in ogni sua azione fama di omo grande e di ingegno eccellente."*<sup>170</sup>

What Machiavelli described could be understood as a shock-and-awe technique: Prove that you are ready to stick at nothing in order to earn your apparent reputation. And for a rogue leader in a third-world banana republic, such standards may just be the right thing to do, but Trump is not the dictator of Liberia or the Russian czar, he is supposed to be the leader of the free world. He is usually held to higher standards as per his office, and Republicans are supposed to uphold those standards just as much. In the end, they have never tired of remembering everyone that they are the party of Lincoln and Reagan. Ever since the 2020 general election and the ensuing January 06 Capitol Hill Insurrection, they might as well call themselves the party of Charles D. B. King. As for his documented harassment of the opposition<sup>171</sup>, which would be the traits of both authoritarians as well as the Fascists, we will keep our feet still in

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<sup>170</sup> Machiavelli, Niccolò (aut.); Scichilone, Giorgio (Ed.) *Il Principe*. In: Ibid. (aut.) Ciliberto, Michele; Accendere, Pier Davide (2018 [1971]). Niccolò Machiavelli. *Tutte le Opere*. Roma: Bompiani. Pagina 889.

<sup>171</sup> Vogel, Kenneth P.; Goldmacher, Shane (March 19, 2025). With Orders, Investigations and Innuendo, Trump and G.O.P. Aim to Cripple the Left. *New York Times*:  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2025/03/19/us/politics/trump-republicans-attack-democrats-actblue.html>

This is not to play down what he is doing, which is already unbecoming of a Democracy, needless to say to the first Democracy in its modern form this world has ever seen, but as I have mentioned in my Introduction, we need to stay sober and describe the world as it is, without unnecessary exaggeration that blinds us before reality. It does not change the fact that he must be stopped, hence my verdict at the very end of this text.

describing this as his next tad towards his idols—Orbán Viktor, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, &c.—until we have got more information that it even got as close to the Narendra Modi playbook as it had to be to become a manifest issue, rather than his haggling with newly obtained powers he didn't have during his first tenure because then, the Congress was still more levelled than it is now.

Where does this leave us all at? What can we do about the probable descent of the United States from the lodestar of the free world, the beacon of people in despair, the masthead of Democracy and Capitalism into said banana republic? As people, we can do little. Of course there will be the Midterm Elections in 2027, where some of those who have enabled the President into his unchecked rampage can be voted out of Congress and replaced with someone who is willing to confront the powermonger as the office obliged them. But otherwise, all that could possibly be done is to phone one's Representative, try to get involved in class action lawsuits to do Congress' work and enforce withdrawals of unlawful policies. James Carville, a Democratic consultant and strategist, has suggested in an op-ed to the New York Times that Democrats should remain in a state of impotence and watch as the Trump administration proved its incapability to work properly and get things done in an advantageous way for everyday Americans<sup>172</sup>. To be honest, I find this idea to be extremely stupid. I see the point that he is making and it is a sign of his few lasting brain cells that he admitted the advice to be daring, but they didn't stop him from penning it down and sending it to the NYT. He thinks that constituents would approve of Democrats' inactivity in office because they believed they didn't stand a chance against the President and his entourage. This is not true. Even though all attempts to rein in on the calamity shall be in vain, it would show that they at least have tried to do something—an act that is likelier to be gratified by voters than “rolling over and playing dead” to let the train conductor roll the engine over the cliff, to then tell the survivors that there was nothing that they could have done to stop the train passing warning sign after sign. Carville also claimed that Democrats didn't have a noticeable leader to guide them, which I

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<sup>172</sup> Carville, James (Feb. 25, 2025) James Carville: It's Time for a Daring Political Maneuver, Democrats. New York Times: <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/02/25/opinion/democrats-trump-congress.html>

believe Hakeem Jeffries of New York State's 8<sup>th</sup> district didn't like to hear from one of the most veteran strategists the party has got to offer. And even without the House Minority Speaker, the Democratic party does have potential: They still have got Representatives Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York State's 14<sup>th</sup> district; Marie Gluesenkamp-Pérez of Washington State's 3<sup>rd</sup> district; or Eric Swalwell from California's 14<sup>th</sup> district. Carville stylises the Democrats as weaker than they are, even though there are few chances they could convince enough Republicans to "desert" and break the party line vote. But they need to try: The only thing that can stop a rogue, anti-Democratic President from having it his way is a Congressmembers who will uphold the rule of law and proper procedures, while checking upon him on his every step of the way. Let the yes sayers claim that they tried to stop the President from serving the people on the mandate they granted him, for they have long abandoned the Constitution they vowed to serve. There is no use to argue with people who reject to play by the rules. The only other chance Democrats have got when they think that it is in vain to enforce rules in a game where half of the people chose to no longer the procedure is to learn from what Pope Leo XIII. once said:

*"[...] if the laws of the State are manifestly at variance with the divine law, containing enactments hurtful to the Church, or conveying injunctions adverse to the duties imposed by religion, or if they violate in the person of the supreme Pontiff the authority of Jesus Christ, then, truly, to resist becomes a positive duty, to obey, a crime; a crime, moreover, combined with misdemeanor against the State itself, inasmuch as every offense leveled against religion is also a sin against the State."*<sup>173</sup>

It should not be a surprise that President Trump's actions do not accord with the Gospel, whether he laid it out as an Evangelical Protestant or as a Catholic, let alone as a Methodist or a Jesuit. It is well-known that many Evangelicals in the United States supported him<sup>174</sup>, but they can be classified as single-issue

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<sup>173</sup> Pontifex Leo XIII. (Jan. 10, 1890). *Sapientiae Christianae*. The Vatican City: [https://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_l-xiii\\_enc\\_10011890\\_sapientiae-christianae.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_10011890_sapientiae-christianae.html)

<sup>174</sup> McCrummen, Stephanie (Oct. 01, 2024). The Christian Radicals are Coming. The Atlantic: <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2024/10/eau-claire-tent-revival/680097/>

voters, their issue being the restriction of abortion rights and the promotion of religious charter schools under the guise of free school choice. The problem is that at least on the former subject, Trump is not as hard-wired as on so many others<sup>175</sup>, which should have left a good part of this group fall from grace with his ticket, even though it didn't, after all—the hope died last. In addition thereto, throughout his first tenure, even the most atheist people were able to point out the obvious examples of how Trump didn't align with any layout of Christian theology: He is a divorced, he shows little to no respect before women and often adulterated, he openly approved of sodomy by making advancements towards his own daughter, he never attends the mass (likely never has), he likely never read the Good Book, he values wealth greater than God, he reeks with pride, wrath and envy<sup>176</sup>. He is the very opposite of a good Christian man, no matter how low we hung the bar. But what in my opinion weighed greatest on his neck is his lack of compassion for the needy.

In the early to the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, the advent of philanthropy upon the sight of almost Dickensian conditions (at least by our understanding and alternately thorough and informed view of the times) in English working-class boroughs has led to wide-ranging legislative actions that would in turn motivate wealthy people to care about the needy, with the result being that their conditions were lifted in such a way as that they no longer had to live their lives as impoverished workers in the gutters<sup>177</sup>. Trump is the opposite of such

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Smith, Peter (May 18, 2024). Jesus is their savior, Trump is their candidate. Ex-president's backers say he shares faith, values. AP News: <https://apnews.com/article/trump-christian-evangelicals-conservatives-2024-election-43f25118c133170c77786daf316821c3>

Beaumont, Thomas (April 12, 2023). Trump and Iowa evangelicals: A bond that is hard to break. AP News: <https://apnews.com/article/trump-evangelical-abortion-iowa-0707607982651226d6859733637a453e>

<sup>175</sup> Wehner, Peter (Aug. 27, 2024). Trump's Evangelical Supporters Just Lost Their Best Excuse. The Atlantic: <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2024/08/trump-betrays-pro-life-movement/679622/>

<sup>176</sup> Winters, Michael Sean (Nov. 08, 2019). The seven deadly sins of Donald Trump. National Catholic Reporter: <https://www.ncronline.org/opinion/distinctly-catholic/seven-deadly-sins-donald-trump>

<sup>177</sup> Himmelfarb, Gertrude (1994). The De-Moralization of Society. From Victorian Virtues to Modern Values. New York City: Vintage Books. Pp. 144–145.

philanthropists, even though he could perhaps help the poor children of New York City, his hometown, and still be better off than a good part of US society, especially his main voter bases. He didn't even need to look across the pond for inspiration—Andrew Carnegie also became known as the author of “The Gospel of Wealth”, where philanthropy was emphasised as the guiding virtue of every wealthy person in the States<sup>178</sup>. And wasn't it Jesus who once quipped that “[...] again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.” (Matt. 19:24)? Had President Trump ever read the Good Book, he would also be familiar that it teaches us to help those in need, whether they are strangers or our fellow countrymen. As it says in Leviticus 25:35: “And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him: yea, though he be a stranger, or a sojourner; that he may live with thee.” He also makes no difference between denomination or confession, he just says that we should help each other in times of need, lest we may once ask them to return the favour when we lay downtrodden. But Trump does not seem to understand that it is always a give and take, hence he breaks up with our allies in Europe to instead befriend crooked autocrats like Владимир Путин or Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. This is another betrayal upon the country: To abandon the international partnerships with whom we share principles to seek alliances with those who stand in opposite to us. It is remarkable to think about the speech Vice President J. D. Vance has given at the Munich Security Conference<sup>179</sup> and how he admonished the

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<sup>178</sup> “*There are instances of millionaires’ sons unspoiled by wealth, who, being rich, still perform great services in the community. Such are the very salt of the earth, as valuable as, unfortunately, they are rare.*” (Carnegie, Andrew (1900). *The Gospel of Wealth. And Other Timely Essays*. New York City: The Century Co. Pp. 9–10.)

<sup>179</sup> C-SPAN (Feb. 14, 2025). Vice President Vance Speaks at Munich Security Conference. Link: <https://www.c-span.org/program/international-telecasts/vice-president-vance-speaks-at-munich-security-conference/655804> . From the speech: “This last October, the Scottish government began disturbing letters to citizens whose houses lay within so-called safe access zones, warning them that even private prayer within their own homes may amount to breaking the law. Naturally, the government urged readers to report fellow citizens suspected of thought crime. In Britain and across Europe, free speech, I fear, is in retreat.” Since this likens the half-baked fearmongering one can witness when none scrolls through Elon Musk’s Twitter account, it is easy to guess that he has no clue what he is talking about.

European partners for alleged violations and infringements of free speech, to then, weeks later, see and hear President Trump befriend countries in which journalists are being hunted down and deemed enemies of the people because they report critically about their government. In President Trump's track record, this is nothing new, he has himself been a boon for free speech in journalism too. He has revoked the extension of licences for press agencies like Reuters and the Associated Press, and even denied the latter entry to the White House press pool because it refused to describe the body of water between the United States and México as the "Gulf of America"<sup>180</sup>. It is a ridiculous reason

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He referred to the "Abortion Services Act of 2024", which ruled that no protests or silent prayers may be held within a 650 m perimeter near abortion clinics in order to avert harassment of their patrons. (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2024/10/contents/enacted>) Compare this legislation to the list of words the Trump administration has ruled unlawful and therefore to no longer be allowed in research or the very exercise of governmental work: <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2025/03/07/us/trump-federal-agencies-websites-words-dei.html> and you will quickly realise that the true threat to free speech lies within the Beltway, not in Holyrood.

<sup>180</sup> Reuters (Feb. 26, 2025). White House takes control of the press pool covering Trump. Link: <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/white-house-takes-control-press-pool-covering-trump-2025-02-25/>

Bauder, David (Feb. 19, 2025). Trump says AP will be curtailed at the White House until it changes its style to Gulf of America. AP News: <https://apnews.com/article/trump-ap-white-house-press-corps-pool-91535a6384d681fee1cd7e384ea6c627>

Pethő, András (March 15, 2025). Trump's Attempts to Muzzle the Press Look Familiar. The Atlantic: <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2025/03/trumps-press-freedom-hungary-orban/682060/>

Reporters without Borders (web crawl from Feb. 19, 2025). One month of Trump: Press freedom under siege. RSF via Wayback Machine: <https://web.archive.org/web/20250219214848/https://rsf.org/en/one-month-trump-press-freedom-under-siege>

At first I was sceptical whether the time was rife to "break the news" in this footnote, but due to my laggardness in progress, President Trump had all the time in the world to cultivate them to the point where there was no way around them: The U.S. Global Media department that administered both the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty, which one could understand as legacy media in their own rights when it came to transmitting US news to the world abroad (amongst others, we will get to that), was by means of an Executive Order laid off to a degree where it is factually unable to continue its work properly. (The White House (March 14, 2025), "Continuing the Reduction of the Federal Bureaucracy",

based on nothing but vanity, while the consequences are a manifest impairment of the free press. But as it can be read in the Atlantic piece cited hereunder, it shows which playbook it follows: Another autocrat who not only President Trump idolises, and for much more than just the manhandling of the free press. As a European, I can only wish that if the US become more like Orbán's Hungary, that the civil society will learn from its pioneers of centuries ago and revolt against this power grasp.

Benjamin Franklin is often quoted having said that the US had “a republic, if you can keep it”, in response to a question by Ms. Elizabeth Willing Powel who asked him whether the country were a monarchy or a republic<sup>181</sup>. If we asked ourselves the same question again, we may not be able to answer it so positively yet cautiously, assuming that the ongoing procedures continued in like fashion, even though I do not mean to instil any fear in anyone. And although I enquire everyone to remain calm, we must also not leave the *Quivive* and instead must remain observant and ready to counter all tendencies that mean to injure Democratic institutions or infringe our civil liberties. A man who is ready to bargain said liberties and freedom for personal advantage and benefits cannot be trusted than his next steps can be foretold; and those are not many. My final words of the blog post on President Trump as a tyrant<sup>7</sup> still stand and should now be understood as a warning. If the Second Amendment was ever meant for anything good, then it was for the slaying of tyrants<sup>7</sup>, one of which is now about

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<https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/03/continuing-the-reduction-of-the-federal-bureaucracy/>) In public statements, President Trump alleged both outlets of spreading propaganda, which would have been correct had he lived and served as President a about eighty years ago, when the latter in particular worked as a means to keep in touch with the partisans in Warszawa and the protesters in Budapest, both of which stood up respectively against the Soviet régime. (Wilford, Hugh (2009 [2008]). *The Mighty Wurlitzer*. Cambridge (MA); London (UK): Harvard University Press. Pp. 49–50)

<sup>181</sup> Miller, Julie (Jan. 06, 2022). “A republic if you can keep it”: Elizabeth Willing Powel, Benjamin Franklin, and the James McHenry Journal. Library of Congress Blogs: <https://blogs.loc.gov/manuscripts/2022/01/a-republic-if-you-can-keep-it-elizabeth-willing-powel-benjamin-franklin-and-the-james-mchenry-journal/>



to rise from the depths of the Beltway<sup>182</sup>. It would also not count as anti-American to do so, *au contraire* ! Every freshman in the humanities could recount from the heart the main themes of Henry David Thoreau's "Civil Disobedience" and how he not only shaped the American philosophy of transcendentalism, but also the all-American sentiment of protesting an overall oppressive government; almost French if we had found a guillotine on the Boston Haymarket, rather than the quelling of protesters by the law enforcement<sup>183</sup>. It could of course pose a problem that we, again, did not listen

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<sup>182</sup> It may seem hypocritical that I of everyone who could bring it up in this context would now stand in support of this Amendment, also because I have written briefly about it and how it is being commonly, and sometimes intentionally, misinterpreted to favour individual arming-to-teeth. You can read my abridged opinion under the following source:

Bender, Oliver (2022). Capitalism & Anarchism. Rationalpolitik. Link: <https://politique-rationale.blogspot.com/2022/11/capitalismanarchism.html#more>. Pp. 608–620.

<sup>183</sup> As the Anarchist Emma Goldman recounted the incident in her autobiography, and it deems it appropriate to quote the whole passage outlining the event as it unfolded from a mere agitprop to a bloodthirsty carnage whose ultimate perpetrator could not be identified, at least during her time:

*"The entire speech concerned the stirring events in Chicago. She began by relating the historical background of the case. She told of the labour strikes that broke out throughout the country in 1886, for the demand of an eight-hour workday. The centre of the movement was Chicago, and there the struggle between the toilers and their bosses became intense and bitter. A meeting of the striking employees of the McCormick Harvester Company in that city was attacked by police; men and women were beaten and several persons killed. To protest against the outrage a mass meeting was called in Haymarket Square on May 4. It was addressed by Albert Parsons, August Spies, Adolph Fischer, and others, and was quiet and orderly. This was attested to by Carter Harrison, Mayor of Chicago, who had attended the meeting to see what was going on. The Mayor left, satisfied that everything was all right, and he informed the captain of the district to that effect. It was getting cloudy, a light rain began to fall, and the people started to disperse, only a few remaining while one of the last speakers was addressing the audience. Then Captain Ward, accompanied by a strong force of police, suddenly appeared on the square. He ordered the meeting to disperse forthwith. "This is an orderly assembly," the chairman replied, whereupon the police fell upon the people, clubbing them unmercifully. Then something flashed through the air and exploded, killing a number of police officers and wounding a score of others. It was never ascertained who the actual culprit was, and the authorities apparently made little effort to discover him. Instead orders were immediately issued for the arrest of all the speakers at the Haymarket meeting and other prominent anarchists. The entire press and bourgeoisie of Chicago and of the whole country began shouting for the blood of the prisoners. A veritable campaign of terror was carried on by the police, who were given moral*

to the anti-Federalists when we should have, as protesters today now faced the national guard on the one hand and a standing army in the other. I don't speak about any of the aforementioned anti-Federalists, but another one who again published essays in newspapers under a *nom de plume*: Brutus, the mythological slayer of Julius Caesar. Perhaps he was wrong to claim that "the power to raise armies, is indefinite and unlimited, and authorises the raising forces, as well in

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*and financial encouragement by the Citizens' Association to further their murderous plan to get the anarchists out of the way."*

(Goldman, Emma (1934 [1931]). *Living my Life*. New York City: Alfred A. Knopf. Pp. 7–8. Underscores mine.)

It does not take an anti-government Anarchist to identify the police as one of the main perpetrators, even though they had good reason to fight back since they were assailed in plain sight by a terrorist who lit a bomb within their rows. Since a couple of their own have died in consequence, we could not speak of a false-flag action meant to justify the application of live ammunition against the peaceful protesters, i.e. the audience who listened to the keynote speakers, and dispersed orderly, as we can read underscored in the above block quote. What happened thereafter was not initiated by the bombing, which must leave us wondering what was going on that the unsolicited violent response was so shortly preceding the lethal bombing. Perhaps it was a distorted perception by Ms. Goldman, and the clubbing followed the bombing, which would make more sense. What is more is that, in a manner comparable to Edward Longshanks, it hit both the audience and the police officers, which would let us believe that it was a rogue actor who wanted to kill police officers even if it meant to create collateral damage on the presumably innocent side as well. In the end, whoever the exploder was, he is the sole perpetrator; except for the police officer(s) who started clubbing the spectators who, In their opinion, did not disperse quickly enough, no-one did anything wrong, their reasons for assembly and protest, as we too can read underscored above, their pursuits were honourable and moderate by today's standards, and with regards to the conditions they went through until then. To claim that the police's behaviour during and after the "Haymarket Massacre" were symptomatic of their *métier* were equal to claiming that all unionists and Anarchists were bloody murderers and terrorists who sought nothing but distraught and disorder. It was corruption and cahoots that stopped investigations in exposing the perpetrator, so that the procedures that followed the Massacre are not at all surprising for its day and age. Nowadays, at least, if something like this happened again, the public would learn about it and the names of those in charge who had to be held accountable, if not immediately in office, then later in court trials. That is what separates us from the young republic Ms. Goldman observed on this day in Boston.

peace as in war”<sup>184</sup>, although the declaration of the President as the Commander-in-Chief does indeed grant him widely spun powers over their deployment in the country, even though he still cannot declare war without Congress’ approval. Luckily, it was the later President Rutherford B. Hayes who would pass the law 18 U.S.C. § 1385 that would make it a crime to deploy any branch of the army for anything other than “expressly authorized by the Constitution or Act of Congress”. Does this protect us from President Trump’s whimsical behaviour? Not at all. And so, it was not Brutus but An Old Whig who has pointed out the obvious about standing armies at peacetime and their power when vested by the President who has become a tyrant:

*“a standing army will be wholly at their devotion, and the authority which is given them over the militia, by virtue of which they may, if they please, change all the officers of the militia on the continent in one day, and put in new officers whom they can better trust; by which they can subject all the militia to strict military laws, and punish the disobedient with death, or otherwise, as they shall think right: by which they can march the militia back and forward from one end of the continent to the other, at their discretion; these powers, if they should ever fall into bad hands, may be abused to the worst of purposes..”*<sup>185</sup>

Some would now allege me of fearmongering when ruminating the idea that President Trum may order the deployment of the army within the civilian population, but this would mean to assume that he were a stranger to at least contemplating the possibility of doing so, to which he has given us the favour of setting a precedence during his first tenure, when he openly uttered the idea of at least deploying the National Guard upon mostly peaceful BLM protesters<sup>186</sup>, which took him much less time than it did him to utter when insurrectionists were storming the Capitol Building in order to obstruct the verification of the

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<sup>184</sup> Essays of Brutus, N<sup>o</sup> VIII (Jan. 10, 1788). In: Storing, Herbert J.; Dry, Murray (Eds.) The Complete Anti-Federalist, vol. II. Chicago; London: The University of Chicago Press. Page 406.

<sup>185</sup> Essays of An Old Whig, V (Oct. 1787 - Feb. 1788). In: *Ibid.*, vol. III. Page 36.

<sup>186</sup> Superville, Darlene; Sullivan, Tim; Morrison, Aaron (June 02, 2020). Trump threatens military force against protesters nationwide. AP News: <https://apnews.com/article/mo-state-wire-in-state-wire-mi-state-wire-election-2020-virus-outbreak-a2797b342b4fc509e43f404817a56aa9>

November 2020 general election results<sup>187</sup>. There is no denying that looting happened during the protests of majority-black communities, but since those protesters posed no greater threat other than excessive burglary and proprietary damage, a mere police force sufficed to disperse those crowds and make arrests. The Capitol Hill insurrectionists, on the other hand, appeared in much greater masses, many of them in tactical armour and sometimes armed either with blunt objects that were misused as weapons, sprays to disarm police officers and rarely ballistic weaponry<sup>188</sup>. Capitol Hill police officer Brian Sicknick, who later committed suicide due to his experiences on this fateful day, became the symbol of how a misguided belief of civil disobedience based on what critics of President Trump would coin “The Great Lie”, could lead to the shakeup of the world’s greatest nation. And despite those experiences we all collectively made, although merely through televised and written reports of the events, we must not lay those tools to rest as an attempt to learn our lessons to not repeat the same mistakes as they made. For as I have mentioned beforehand, it is written into the genes of every US-American that tyrannical, despotic or authoritarian régimes must not be tolerated and duly unselected during the next orderly election; President Trump may endeavour to unhinge the Amendment limiting the presidential tenures to two. (The 22<sup>nd</sup> Amendment, in case you wondered) He has already enquired the Supreme Court to permit him the undermining of the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment in order to speed up and widen the scope of his mass

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<sup>187</sup> Baldor, Lolita C. (Jan. 08, 2021). AP FACT CHECK: Trump distorts record on National Guard in DC. AP News: <https://apnews.com/article/fact-check-national-guard-in-dc-c4c8f14643b6254e261aa0be0841e9e2>

<sup>188</sup> Reuters Fact Check (Jan. 16, 2021). Fact Check: US Capitol attack rioters had weapons, including firearms. Reuters: <https://www.reuters.com/fact-check/us-capitol-attack-rioters-had-weapons-including-firearms-2021-01-16/>

Jackman, Tom; Weiner, Rachel; Hsu, Spencer S. (July 08, 2022). Evidence of firearms in Jan. 6 crowd grows as arrests and trials mount. The Washington Post: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2022/07/08/jan6-defendants-guns/>

Milani, E., Noll, S., Maurano, A., & Phillips, J. (2021). 109 Novel Weapons Employed During Recent Civil Disturbances in Washington, DC. *Annals of Emergency Medicine*, 78(4), S45. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annemergmed.2021.09.119>

deportation plans<sup>189</sup>. If he, as a sitting President, were only a little more erudite on the statutory law, he would know that he was wrong to summon the Supreme Court for this question as it is not within his purview to make Amendments to the Constitution, or lift them. (And unless I will release this blog post beforehand, you will read about this in a footnote; otherwise, you will not read those words in this place because I in turn had to make amendments to my own text because I was wrong) It reads there, in 1 U.S.C § 106b, that “any amendment proposed to the Constitution of the United States has been adopted, according to the provisions of the Constitution”. It is Congress that adopts Amendments, and lifts them when a due majority was reached in both chambers, especially in the Senate as the one having the last word on legal drafts. If that were too much for him, a quick gaze into the Constitution itself sufficed to learn about who he had to consult. Article v of the Constitution reads as follows:

*“The Congress, whenever two thirds of both Houses shall deem it necessary, shall propose Amendments to this Constitution, or, on the Application of the Legislatures of two thirds of the several States, shall call a Convention for proposing Amendments, which, in either Case, shall be valid to all Intents and Purposes, as Part of this Constitution, when ratified by the Legislatures of three fourths of the several States, or by Conventions in three fourths thereof, as the one or the other Mode of Ratification may be proposed by the Congress; [...]”*

Weren't President Trump surrounded by yellow yes-sayers, he may have been able to skip this unnecessary provision to the Supreme Court and instead gather all relevant heads of Republican Congressmembers in his vocational resort in Florida to create a quorum to overturn the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment. We will see how this proceeds, and until then, we shall reinvigorate our conviction that the last resort to save US-American Democracy is nothing short of a revolution, the basic right of every American as it is so deeply ingrained in their DNA. As the Anarchist Lysander Spooner has once written: “The right of revolution, which tyrants, in mockery, accord to mankind, is no legal right under a government; it is only a natural right to overturn a government. The

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<sup>189</sup> Howe, Amy (March 13, 2025). Trump asks Supreme Court to step in on birthright citizenship. SCOTUS Blog: <https://www.scotusblog.com/2025/03/trump-asks-supreme-court-to-step-in-on-birthright-citizenship/>

government itself never acknowledges this right.”<sup>190</sup> The first time one could claim to make use of this right was during the Boston Tea Party, when the first Americans who could claim to speak in the name of their fatherland rebelled against the English crown, and successfully so; after some minor revolts like the Whiskey Rebellion in Pennsylvania, the next large uprising was the 2021 insurrection instigated by outgoing President Donald J. Trump, who after four years could make a successful comeback, the aftermath of which we have now been watching for approximately 59 days if I haven’t miscalculated it. (I am saying so on the 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2025) President Trump is still charting the field in a fog of uncertainty as to how far he can go. And I would say: He has already gone too far and must be stopped in his way, either peacefully and with his consent, or violently and without his or his party’s consent. Democracy cannot wait for a tyrant to confess his error and resign his post for a law-abiding successor. Few to no autocrats of any colour have resigned peacefully to make space for peace and prosperity. If they have, then they would usually be succeeded by like kin. The US must not set a precedence for its normalcy, and instead show the world how such men are treated; must be treated. It is upon Americans to again show the free world that bad men will out. Else, we will all be doomed because villainy championed the free world. It is on us to decide what we want. This fight is about nothing less than our freedoms and liberties, and as Thomas Paine has written,

“the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly: it is dearness only that gives every thing its value. Heaven knows how to put a proper price upon its goods; and it would be strange indeed if so celestial an article as FREEDOM should not be highly rated.”<sup>191</sup> Freedom, like Democracy, are no givens in the human world, they are both fragile like porcelain and can be withdrawn in a sideswipe. And if they are not fought for, it will not even require battery of any kind to remove them from the face of society. The older generations remember it well as some of them may have served in Europe during WW 11 and were part of the landfall in Omaha

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<sup>190</sup> Spooner, Lysander (1852). The Trial by Jury, as defined by Magna Carta. In: *Ibid.* (1972). Let’s Abolish Government. New York City: Arno Press & New York Times. Page 16.

<sup>191</sup> Paine, Thomas (Dec. 19, 1776). The Crisis. In: Paine, Thomas (aut.); Foner, Eric (Ed.) (1995 [1984]). Collected Writings. New York City: Library of America. Page 91. Upper-case letters the author’s.

Beach. The calculation on whether those factors are worth fighting for, we must imagine what we enjoy about living in the Western world, and understand how they are linked to those premises. Free speech may be the most outstanding factor. Freedom from governmental overreach in our private lives is another one.

Some may feel squeamish about the hardship one is going to experience once one stands up against the government, but there too, the Founding Fathers and their contemporaries of letters have addressed this. Thomas Jefferson, who we have written from beforehand already, has once coined a quotation that we all have written frequently on the internet and elsewhere, but for good reason so because it is a strong sentiment that, in my opinion, is ingrained in American history and must finally be put into good use; as Elvis Presley would have said, now or never. In a letter to William Stephens, Thomas Jefferson wrote that

*“What country before ever existed a century and half without a rebellion? And what country can preserve it’s liberties if their rulers are not warned from time to time that their people preserve the spirit of resistance? Let them take arms. The remedy is to set them right as to facts, pardon and pacify them. What signify a few lives lost in a century or two? The tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants. It is it’s natural manure.”*<sup>192</sup>

The United States have already had their fair share of rebellions, but since human life and interactivity has never been a foreseeable project that sustained everlasting peace and prosperity, it could not be assumed that after its unification, it would thenceforth transform into the Isle of Pines. Now it instead stands athwart in history and must see where it shall sail. And with God and its spawn willing, it can topple this tyrant-in-waiting and steer clear of future like successors, towards its own Heaven on earth.

## FINIS

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<sup>192</sup> “From Thomas Jefferson to William Stephens Smith, 13 November 1787,” Founders Online, National Archives, <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-12-02-0348>. [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 12, 7 August 1787–31 March 1788, ed. Julian P. Boyd. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955, pp. 355–357.]